

NT PARLIAMENTARIANS
GRAPH SERIES

BHUPESH GUPTA

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

1990

**EMINENT PARLIAMENTARIAN
MONOGRAPH SERIES**

BHUPESH GUPTA

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
1990**

LSS (PRIS-ESS) EPM/6

© Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1990

October, 1990

Price: Rs. 50.00

Published under rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (Seventh Edition) and printed by the Manager, Photo Litho Unit, Government of India Press, Minato Road, New Delhi.

FOREWORD

The Indian Parliamentary Group has recently celebrated the birth anniversaries of some eminent parliamentarians in order to recall and recount their valuable and multifarious contributions to our national and parliamentary life. In pursuance of this endeavour, a new series known as the "Eminent Parliamentarians Monograph Series" was started in March, 1990 and three monographs on Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Dr. Lanka Sundaram and Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee have been brought out so far.

The present monograph seeks to provide some glimpses into the life and parliamentary activities of Shri Bhupesh Gupta—a veteran leader of the Communist Party of India and a distinguished parliamentarian. This monograph is being published in Hindi, Bengali and English.

The monograph consists of three parts. Part one contains a profile of Shri Bhupesh Gupta, giving a brief account of his early days, his education, his ideas, his role as a freedom fighter, as a leader of the communist movement in India, as a champion of weaker sections of society, as a staunch supporter of women's rights, as a votary of secularism and national integration, as a distinguished writer and journalist and above all, as an outstanding parliamentarian. Part two contains excerpts from select speeches delivered by him in the Rajya Sabha of which he was a member for almost three decades. Part three highlights a lesser-known aspect of his personality by recalling certain witty interventions made by him during the course of discussions in the House.

On the occasion of his birth anniversary, we pay our respectful tributes to the memory of one of the tallest in the House of Elders, Bhupesh Da, as he was popularly known and hope that this monograph would be read with interest and found useful.

RABI RAY

*Speaker, Lok Sabha
and*

New Delhi;
December, 1990

President, Indian Parliamentary Group

Contents

FOREWORD

PART ONE

His Life

1

BHUPESH GUPTA

A Profile

1

PART TWO

His Ideas

**Excerpts from some select speeches of Shri Bhupesh Gupta in
Rajya Sabha**

2

Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Bill

(17)

3

Conference of World Powers on Nuclear Test Explosions

(26)

4

Economic Development

(33)

5

Promotion of Hindi Language

(39)

6

**Prevention of Intrusion of Big Money and use of Government
Machinery in Elections**

(55)

(iii)

7

Centre-State Relations

(67)

8

Right of Employment as a Fundamental Right

(74)

9

US Military Assistance to Pakistan

(82)

10

Status of Women in India

(98)

11

Lowering of Voting Age

(111)

12

Parliamentary Committees

(123)

PART THREE

Some Lighter Interludes

(132)

PART ONE

His Life



Bhupesh Gupta—A Profile

Comrade Bhupesh Gupta, one of the leading luminaries of the communist movement in India, an able parliamentarian and a gifted orator, was born on 20 October, 1914 at Itna in Mymensingh district of East Bengal (now called Bangladesh). His father, Shri Mahesh Chandra Gupta was a rich landlord. Born in a wealthy family, Shri Bhupesh Gupta could have led a life of ease and affluence but he hardly cared for it. The urge to serve the country led him to live a life of simplicity and dedication to the cause of the motherland. He took the first perilous plunge in this field at an early age of 16, never looking back or regretting the dolce vita that with his social background he had chosen deliberately to abjure. Wedded to an active public life at such an early age, it is not surprising that Shri Bhupesh Gupta chose to remain a life-long bachelor with single-minded devotion to the service of the country and the communist cause.

His education

Shri Bhupesh Gupta, all along a brilliant student, was educated at Scottish Church College, Calcutta and University College, London. He joined India's struggle for freedom at an early age and was detained several times but his quest for knowledge remained undiminished. He passed his I.A. and B.A. examinations of the Calcutta University from Berhampur detention camp with distinction. Later on, his father wrote to the Government that he wanted to send his son to England for higher studies. The Government agreeing, Bhupesh went to

England to study law and was called to the bar from the Middle Temple, London.

As a freedom fighter

Bhupesh Gupta, a born fighter as he was, fought against the British imperialism right from his student days. Even after the attainment of independence, he continued his valiant struggle against neo-colonialism and other forms of domination with pungent tenacity.

Completely dedicated to the cause of motherland, Shri Bhupesh Gupta was drawn into the magic circle of national revolutionaries at a very young age. He joined a revolutionary group called *Anushilan* which was headed by Surendra Mohan Ghosh—the famous revolutionary leader. He took an active part in the Civil Disobedience Movement, was arrested several times during the years 1930, 1931 and 1933 and was kept in detention till 1937. But Bhupesh Gupta, was determined, to serve his country. He was sent to England by his father so that he could be kept away from the revolutionary movement. But in England, too, he took part in the Indian students' struggle to free their motherland from foreign domination. Thus, in preeminent measure, Bhupesh Gupta lived a life of devotion and dedication and of unremitting, single-minded endeavour in the task of national liberation.

As a Communist

Though a scion of a rich Zamindar family, Shri Bhupesh Gupta had no attachment to worldly pleasures. A spartan, he spurned all comforts and luxuries, too often associated with the elite class. His fascination for the communist ideology started in 1930s when he was put in a detention camp for being a member of Surendra Mohan Ghosh's revolutionary group. There he came in touch with the enlightening and humanist features of the Marxist ideology.

After completing his studies in England, 'Bhupeshda', as he was endearingly called by his friends and fellow workers, returned to India in 1941 and devoted himself full-time to the work of the Communist Party of India (CPI). Initially he worked

at the underground headquarters of the CPI. He was also one of the founders of the Friends of the Soviet Union (FSU) in 1941. In 1947, he was elected to the West Bengal Provincial Committee of the CPI and was appointed as Chairman of the editorial board of the party's Bengali daily *Swadhinata* in 1951. Since the CPI was declared illegal by the Government, he was arrested in 1951 and detained till April, 1952.

Comrade Bhupesh Gupta was elected to the Central Committee of the CPI at its third Congress which was held at Madurai during December, 1953. At the Palghat Congress of the Party in 1956, he was again elected to the Central Committee and thereafter to the Politbureau of the Communist Party. He held various prominent positions in all the leading bodies of the Communist Party. At the time of his death in 1981, he was a member of the Central Executive Committee and Secretary of the National Council of the CPI.

During the split that occurred in the Communist Party in the year 1964, in the wake of the Sino-Indian Border War, Shri Bhupesh Gupta tried his best to seek a way to save the Communist Movement in India from splitting as it was being steadily undermined by the ideological conflict between the leftist and rightist groups within the Party. Even after the Division of the Party into CPI and CPI (M), Bhupesh Gupta endeavoured to bring about reconciliation between the two Parties. He wanted that CPI should work out a programme of common action with the CPI (M) and conduct negotiations for reunification. However, this deadlock could not be resolved.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta was also well-known outside the country, especially among those associated with the International Communist Movement. Ever since he joined the Communist Movement, Comrade Bhupesh Gupta remained a staunch internationalist. As a prominent Indian Communist leader, he outshined others in various national and international conferences. He was a crusader against apartheid and racism. In the Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association held in Kingston, Jamaica in 1979, Bhupeshda's brilliant speech against those who had sought to justify and defend

racism and apartheid earned him the title "hero of the Kingston Conference". He attended the Bucharest preparatory meeting of the International Communist Movement. He was a member of the CPI delegation at the 1957, 1960 and 1969 meetings of the World Communist Movement. He was also a member of the CPI delegation led by the late Comrade Ajay Ghosh which went to Peking in 1959 and met Mao-Tse-Tung.

Bhupesh Gupta was a member of the World Peace Council and was fully involved in its struggle for peace and against imperialism. In fact, the last conference he attended was organised by the Council when he left India on 22 June, 1981 to attend the International Conference of Solidarity with Syria and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Damascus.

His abiding faith in Communist ideology and soundless zeal earned him the reputation of being one of the most outstanding leaders of the Communist Party of India. He was an alert and energetic politician and a parliamentarian *non-pareil* who totally identified himself with the oppressed and the downtrodden and who practised what he preached.

In his activities throughout his political career as a devoted soldier of the CPI, nationalism and internationalism were integrally blended. Bhupeshda demonstrated in practice that communism is the best form of patriotism. His patriotic fervour was very much evident when, while taking part in Rajya Sabha in the discussion on the Defence of India Bill at the time of the Chinese aggression in 1962, Shri Bhupesh Gupta emphatically said:

"I declare on the floor of the House that I do not know of any Communist or a trade-unionist of that sort who is opposed to the defence of the country or who is in sympathy with the aggression that has taken place. If anybody were of that sort and went against not only our resolution but the patriotic position of the country which is in no conflict with our ideology, he would be putting

himself outside the pale of what we call the Communist party and the movement.”*

To his colleagues in the Party, he always remained a tower of strength and an example of revolutionary discipline.

Thus, Bhupeshda spent all his time and thought to imbibe the truth of Marxism-Leninism and had determined that he would live and die as a communist. He firmly believed that freedom could find fulfilment only in socialism and it was this conviction which sustained this simple but strong man throughout his life of ceaseless service to India. He was the symbol of the Marxist integration of patriotism and proletarian internationalism.

As a champion of weaker sections

Comrade Bhupesh Gupta was a great champion and defender of the weaker sections of our society — the *harijans*, *adivasis*, the *khet mazdoors* and others. Both inside and outside Parliament he utilised every opportunity to further the cause of the rural poor and help their movement.

Bhupeshda had deep knowledge of the problems of *Harijans*, *adivasis*, agricultural workers and other rural poor. He ardently desired the growth of class consciousness among them and emergence of their own powerful organisations which would fight for their cause. His writings and speeches on several occasions reflected this desire.

He was, therefore, naturally happy when the Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union (BKMU), the organisation of Indian agricultural workers was formed in 1968 at Moga in Punjab. Later in May, 1972, when Comrade Bhupesh delivered his inaugural address at the second conference of BKMU held at Mannavgudi in Tamil Nadu, he stressed the need for establishment of a class organisation among agricultural workers.

Bhupeshda strongly demanded strict implementation of minimum wages, regular employment and legislation to protect the weaker sections and improve their living and working

* *Rajya Sabha Debates*, 6 December, 1962, CC. 3124-3125.

conditions. He used to say that without improving the lot of agricultural workers, all the talk about rural development will be felony and tomfoolery of the worst type.

As incharge of the Sub-committee on National Integration which was appointed by the Central Executive Committee of the CPI, Bhupesh Gupta pointed out, among other things, that discrimination against *harijans* was an important factor hindering the process of national integration and this aspect should be dealt with adequately in the report of the committee. His valiant struggle for the cause of the rural poor and his untiring efforts to help their movement will ever be cherished by the millions of the oppressed and exploited rural poor of our country.

As an ardent champion of women's rights

Bhupesh Gupta championed ardently the cause of emancipation of women. All along he fought, for elevating their status in all spheres of life.

As a member of Parliament in 1953-54, he fought against the orthodox sections who were opposing the proposed reforms in Hindu laws of marriage, inheritance, etc. Bhupeshji played an important role in getting these laws passed and in building up public opinion in their favour.

In 1975, when the International Women's Year began, he made an impassioned speech in Parliament urging the Government to take some concrete measures during the year to improve the social status and living conditions of the vast majority of women and not confine the celebrations to holding meetings and seminars. In this speech, he observed:

"...Emancipation of women is not a sectarian problem of emancipation of a section of the people. It is essentially a problem of emancipation of womankind from degradation, from bondage, from suffering, from injustices and hardships that destroy the very foundation ultimately of our social life."...

He elaborated with facts and figures the miserable conditions

of working women, housewives, peasant women and other sections so poignantly that many feminists would envy his profound understanding of the problems of this most exploited section of our society.

He took up in the Rajya Sabha the issue of growing atrocities on women, in the form of rape, molestation and bride-burning.

As a votary of secularism and national integration

The cause of national integration was a passion with Bhupesh Gupta. He used every possible forum — Parliament, meetings of the National Integration Council, various Conferences and others — to raise his powerful voice in the defence of the secular-democratic set-up of our country and for strengthening the edifice of national integration. In his speeches, he used to lash out at the forces of communalism. He stressed that the fight against communalism is a matter of our survival as a civilised and forward-looking society.

Bhupeshda was the Communist Party's representative and main spokesman in the National integration Council for nearly 15 years. Unsparing in his denunciation of the forces of communal and other disturbances, he meticulously worked out concrete and constructive proposals for every meeting of the Integration Council in order to defeat the designs of such forces and to preserve our secular set up.

At the meeting of the National Integration Council held in Srinagar in June, 1968, he made a series of suggestions to meet the communal menace, to safeguard secularism and to protect the minorities. A very important suggestion he made was that "the lack of confidence on the part of minority communities in a disturbed area, in any official, should be regarded as a sufficient *prima facie* ground at least for his immediate transfer. For the breakdown of communal peace in any area, the conduct of all officials who are supposed to maintain communal peace and harmony must be at once subjected to the closest scrutiny."

As a distinguished writer and journalist

Comrade Bhupesh, an outstanding journalist, was editor of

"New Age"—a weekly magazine of the CPI from 1954 to 1957 and then again from January, 1966, till his death. Working in this capacity, he contributed a number of investigative and thought-provoking articles on issues of national and international significance.

The *New Age* under his personal guidance devoted several of its columns to highlight the problems of the rural poor and their struggle for emancipation. Particular attention was focused on atrocities being perpetrated against *harijans* in different parts of the country. Bhupeshda used to write articles and editorials in *New Age* on violence and cruelties being inflicted on *harijans* and other weaker sections. Besides, his powerful pen always aimed at supporting the cause of giving equal status to women. Despite the fact that a deadly disease was slowly eating his frame, he continued to write till he breathed his last. He wrote his last article on the results of the Central Committee plenum of the Communist Party of China from his hospital bed in Moscow.

Comrade Bhupesh Gupta was a powerful and prolific writer. He wrote a large number of books, articles and pamphlets, on political, economic and topical themes. He had eight books in English to his credit, namely — (i) *Freedom and the Second Front*; (ii) *Terror over Bengal*; (iii) *Second Five Year Plan — A critique*; (iv) *The Big Loot*; and *Analysis of foreign exploitation in India*; (v) *Why this Food Crisis*; (vi) *Quit Commonwealth*; (vii) *India and American aggression in Vietnam*; and (viii) *Right reaction's bid for power*. Bhupeshda wrote quite a few books in his mothertongue Bengali also, for example, (i) *Nehru Sarkarer Swarup*; (ii) *Pak markin Samarik Chukti O markin Samrajyabad*; and (iii) *Kala Kanuner Rajatva*. These books are an eloquent testimony to the intellectual height of Bhupesh Gupta

As an outstanding Parliamentarian

On 13 May, 1952, Shri Bhupesh Gupta was elected to the *Rajya Sabha* and remained its member till his death on 6 August, 1981. He was the longest serving member in the

Rajya Sabha at the time of his death and was highly respected as an able, alert, extremely competent, irrepressible and indefatigable parliamentarian. Hardly anyone dared to cross swords with him.

On 22 June 1977, when the Rajya Sabha celebrated its 100th session and 25th anniversary, Shri Bhupesh Gupta was specially felicitated. Gratefully acknowledging the felicitations offered by the House, he said that his faith in the people and the aspirations provided by them had helped him to serve the country to the best of his ability. He exhorted that the Rajya Sabha should always be a "vibrant and living institution" to mirror the urges and aspirations of the people.

Every moment that he occupied his seat in Rajya Sabha, he was alert, never missing a single opportunity to intervene, never allowing anything to pass muster without challenge and never faltering in anything that needed to be vigorously defended, supported or argued for. Tenacity was his hallmark and incisiveness his nature. For example, while participating in a discussion in Rajya Sabha on the decision of the U.S. Government to resume arms supply to Pakistan, Shri Bhupesh Gupta very aptly remarked:

"It is quite clear that the United States today wants to build a new balance of military power in our region, and therefore they are interested in using Pakistan as a military base. So it should not be taken as if only Pakistan is interested in building up the arms race and America is not or that America is just a seller of arms. That is not so....The US imperialism knows very well that unless India is browbeaten, curbed, menaced and threatened, it would not be possible for them to have their domineering say in this region, South Asia. Therefore, they made us a special target and that is why they are supplying once again arms to Pakistan."

Shri Bhupesh Gupta's speeches in Rajya Sabha reveal his

* *Rajya Sabha Debates* 10 March, 1975, CC. 132 & 136.

high oratorical skill. He was often sarcastic but never vulgar, brilliant in his argument but humble and he was in his elements when it came to questions pertaining to the cause of the people. He was literally a champion of the toiling millions and the greatest defender of the downtrodden and the oppressed. He never countenanced any single flaw of the treasury benches and had complete mastery over parliamentary rules and procedures. Nothing mattered to him more than the supremacy and dignity of the two Houses of Parliament.

In fact, Bhupesh Gupta fought for broadening the democratic rights and liberties of the people and all along he challenged and fought against any encroachment on them. This has been the running thread of all his speeches along with the content of anti-imperialism, social progress and friendship with socialist countries.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta was a master of parliamentary techniques and forms and he used all the possible openings—special mentions, calling attention, short notice questions, half-an-hour discussions, and questions, etc.,—to put across his point of view. Besides, on major issues like foreign policy, President's address, Finance Bill, Appropriation Bill and discussions on working of ministries, he used to make excellent speeches laced with solid arguments, telling points and of course, good humour and biting sarcasm. If there was any member in any party who was ever ready with his arguments, facts and documentary evidence, it was Bhupesh Gupta.

To give an illustration, on 22 April, 1954, when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru Stated in the Rajya Sabha that "It has been the policy of Government for the last six years not to allow any foreign troops to pass through or fly over India," it was Shri Bhupesh Gupta who brought to the notice of the House a newspaper report saying that on 24 April, 1954, an American Globemaster carrying French troops to Indo-China landed at Dum Dum Airport and then left after refuelling. Another report

* *Rajya Sabha Debates*, 22 April, 1954 C. 3725.

that he quoted, said that on 27 April, 1954, a Skymaster belonging to the French Air Force landed at Dum Dum and left for Indo-China. He also put it on record that the Government of India had not contradicted the report". A few days later, he again referred to a newspaper report which said that on 12 May, 1954, a Skymaster belonging to the French had touched down at Calcutta and "36 French soldiers lived for a few hours in Grand Hotel in Rooms No. 315, 320, 466 and 490 and at about 3.30 a.m. in the early hours of morning they left.""

Everybody, friend and foe alike, admired Shri Bhupesh Gupta's rare and exceptional qualities as a parliamentarian. He was rightly referred to as "the stormy petrel" of the Rajya Sabha. The quality which made him such a parliamentarian, which enabled him to become almost an institution in the history of parliamentary democracy in this country, was his total dedication to the cause of communism, to the cause of the interests of the working masses, to the cause of the oppressed and the downtrodden in the country. This sincere and single-minded dedication marked his entire political life and gave it a character all of its own.

Such a multi-dimensional personality passed away at Moscow on 6 August, 1981, due to heart failure. As soon as the news of his untimely and unexpected death spread, there was shock and grief in all political circles over the loss of the towering personality of Bhupeshda. Hundreds of messages were received from various party leaders at national and international levels condoling the sad demise of Bhupesh Gupta.

Expressing shock over his death, President Neelam Sanjiva Raddy, in his message said that Bhupesh Gupta was an able debator and his services will long be remembered by the country. The then Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, said with the death of Comrade Bhupesh Gupta, "the nation loses one of its most dedicated and eloquent sons." She further said that

*Rajya Sabha Debates, 22 April, 1954 C. 3725.

**Rajya Sabha Debates, 18 May, 1954, C. 6742.

even those who differed from him politically had high respect for him and that the Parliament will not be the same without him.

Shri M. Hidayathullah, the then Chairman, Rajya Sabha said:

“....Apart from his personal qualities in which he combined commonsense with clarity, balanced judgement with political acumen and foresight, his sincerity and motives could never be doubted. He wore his heart on his sleeve and whatever he did was never for personal aggrandisement or advancement. He was an astute and knowing parliamentarian... His first love was, of course, the working classes but he was equally the champion of the poor, the backward and the needy...”

In a message, Dr. Balram Jakhar, the then Speaker of Lok Sabha, said:

“In his passing away, we have lost an outstanding personality in our parliamentary life. He was one of our serious-minded members who pursued the cause dear to him with conviction and commitment.”

Highlighting a lesser known aspect of Bhupeshda's personality, the then Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Shyam Lal Yadav said:

“Though a firebrand revolutionary in his political activities, he has been a very amiable and jovial friend to all his colleagues in the Parliament.”

He further said: “the Rajya Sabha will ever remain incomplete without Shri Bhupesh Gupta because he has been an institution in himself, having adorned the Rajya Sabha benches continuously from its inception in 1952. All his life, he has been fighting for the cause of the downtrodden. It will be difficult to fill the void created by his demise and in his passing away the working class of India has lost a great leader and guide and the Rajya Sabha its oldest member.”

Thus, everyone close to him recalled the endearing nature of Bhupeshda, his total dedication to the cause of the working

people, his powerful pen and tongue, his skill in parliamentary affairs, his warm-heartedness to all his friends in need and the simple and spartan life he led. In fact, Bhupeshda's sincerity of purpose and dedication to values coupled with his commitment to the cause of national and social liberation of his country will continue to inspire those working against exploitation and for establishing a just socio-economic system.

Sources consulted

1. Ahmed, Muzaffar; *Myself and the Communist Party of India-1920-29*, Tr. from Bengali by Prabhas Kumar Sinha, Calcutta, 1970.
2. Majumdar, Asis Kumar: *Indian Foreign Policy and 'Marxist' opposition parties in Parliament*. Calcutta, Naya Prakash, 1986.
3. Mohan Ram; *Indian Communism-split within a split*, Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1969.
4. Mukerjee, Hiren: *Under Communism's crimson colours-reflections on marxism, India and the world scene*. New Delhi : People Publishing House, 1982, pp-146-150.
5. *New Age*, August 9 and 16, 1981.
6. *Rajya Sabha Debates*, Vol. CXIX, Nos. 1-5, 17-21, August, 1981, pp. 2-6.
7. Sengupta, Bhabani: *Communism in Indian Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1972.
8. Sharma, T.R. : *Communism in India—The politics of fragmentation*, New Delhi, Sterling, 1984.
9. Sinha, V.B.: *The Red rebel in India—A study of Communist strategy and tactics*, New Delhi: Associated Publishing House, 1968.
10. *Who's Who*, Rajya Sabha, 1980.

PART TWO

His Ideas

**(Excerpts from some select speeches of Shri Bhupesh Gupta in
Rajya Sabha)**

Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Bill*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am interested in this Bill because I think that measures of this kind should be adopted more and more by the Government not only here at the Centre but also in the States. But I must confess that my initial enthusiasim has been somewhat damped by this short and intriguing speech the Hon. Minister has made. I should have thought that this measure was conceived with human sympathy, with a view to making up what had not been done, with a view to mending certain past failings and omissions on the part of the Government. But now we have been told that it is for the visitors who come to this country, that they must not see such things and that in order that we can present a better and beautiful India we are going to clear these slums. Good luck for the people of Delhi because they are very near to our Ministers and also within the easy approach of the visitors but I, for one, do not view this problem from the point of view of windowdressing, because here is a problem which is a vast problem and on which the Members of the Government have spoken time and again but little has been done. I think Hon. Members will remember the speeches made by the Prime Minister in various places against these slums. He seemed to be at war with the slums. If he had his way, we felt that he would abolish all the slums overnight. We were not interested in the heroics of these speeches but we thought perhaps the Government mind was somewhat disturbed over the spectacle of slums in our country. We thought that something drastic would be done in this matter in order that these 'ghettos' are abolished and the people who

*From the discussion on Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Bill, Rajya Sabha, 18 December, 1956, cc. 2976-2986.

are condemned to lead a despicable life there are brought to lead a better life. But as you know, nothing practical has been done. We don't know to what extent things will be done through this measure in Delhi. The housing problem in our towns has become extremely acute over the last five years and as far as I can make out from a reading of the Second Five Year Plan, the promise for the future is also bleak. I say this because it is clearly stated in the Plan itself that at the end of the Second Five Year Plan, the problem of urban housing would be twice as bad as it is today. It is stated in cold print and if you want, you can look into the Plan and see for yourself. We know that nearly over sixty million people live in towns and cities and a large chunk of this population live in slums unfit for human habitation. We have been told here that in Delhi itself there are over two lakh people living in slum areas which require the attention of Government for immediate clearance measures. The picture is the same and even much worse in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other places. But the Government has not done anything to remedy the situation. Of course, I entirely agree that measures are called for in order to compel greedy landlords to repair the slums, to keep them fit for human habitation and to extend civic amenities to the dwellers there. And if such compelling measures are not there, it does not bring credit to the Government. They have passed so many laws and so many measures. We have seen how Bills are rushed through in this House and the other House. But I would like to know from the Government how it is that it was not possible for them all these years to speed up measures in this direction so that this shame could be eliminated from the civic life. They have not done that. That is something on which the Government should give an explanation to this country. In my view, I say that this is because of certain pressures from these elements of vested interests that the Government has been hesitant in bringing in such measures. Otherwise, when it is keen on ensuring better lives for so many millions of people, how is it that they had not taken any measures to deal with this problem? The Government has to explain to this House and to the country.

This measure that has come before us now is again for too inadequate for meeting the needs of the situation. When the clauses are discussed, no doubt, opinions will be expressed on the various clauses, the inadequacies pointed out, amendments suggested. But taking the measure as it is as a whole at this stage, I would like to say that it is far too inadequate and it will not improve the situation very much in the near future. This is my fear. Sir, this is not a question of your having certain regulations or certain impositions in your hands. The Government must have a proper perspective for rebuilding our towns and urban areas. This is vital in this connection; but nothing of that kind is reflected in the provisions of this Bill. Where is your housing programme? The common people are living in slums sharing places with animals, attempting to live a life which is not good even for animals, but for them, there is practically no programme. I know that some slums will be cleared and some haltry amenities will be installed here and there, but nothing beyond that will be done. But what is needed is a comprehensive housing programme, with proper targets and a perspective set by Government. I think, a start could easily be made in this Bill. Here in Delhi, you are living in very fine houses. We all live in very fine houses here, compared to the houses in which our people are living. But why must not the Government pay attention to those people who are living within the perimeter of Delhi, in those neglected areas of Delhi under dreadful and intolerable conditions? Why can't we draw up a proper housing plan and proceed with it, no matter what the cost to the exchequer may be? Why can't we take measures compelling the greedy, big landlords to immediately make these places better, these slums better so that they may be worth living in? Why can't we ask them to provide better tenements for the people? I do not know how much you can improve these slums that are there. Certainly, you can take some water pipes to these places. You can give these people certain other facilities also, but most of these slums, I am afraid, are beyond repair and beyond any improvement, if we go by modern civilized standards. Therefore, what is necessary today is to have a housing programme and to have tenements where people could

live. We should have more tenements all over the area. But this is a task that cannot be left to the landlords. They will be guided by their profit motive and other considerations which have nothing to do with the well-being of our people. This is a task which has necessarily to be undertaken by the Government, because it is Government alone that can readily fork out the resources and execute a plan of that kind. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Chairman, it is very important that there should be a proper housing programme. But we find big palaces being built in Delhi. We find Ashoka Hotels and what not, being constructed one after another, whenever the Government wants to construct them. And when they want it, there is no dearth of money, no dearth of building materials and all that. But when it comes to a question of building tenements for the working people, for the Government employees of the lower grades, we find the Government moving very slowly, pleading lack of finance and giving all kinds of excuses. That does not speak well of the Government. Therefore, I say, let them take whatever measures are possible, under the provisions of this Bill. But what is essential is a comprehensive housing programme. The Second Five Year Plan fails on that score very miserably. And you know, Sir, it is a matter of sorrow and shame that even the funds that were allotted under the First Plan for industrial housing, for urban housing for the workers, were not spent. The Government was busy with something else. They did not have the time even to spend the money that had been sanctioned for the various housing schemes for industrial workers. This there on record and Government cannot deny it. Therefore, I say so much has not been done and so much remains to be done. What you need is a regular drive, a regular war against slums and you have to start it in an entirely different way. Recall the speech of the Prime Minister in Kanpur and other places about slums and read this Bill. You will at once see the difference between the professed words and the promised purpose. This is where I say this Bill does not even put in the declarations of the Prime Minister of this country. And on that score it fails again.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I would suggest in this connection that this Bill may be passed. But at the same time, the Government should immediately start consultations with those who are also connected with this matter. For evolving a plan for housing in Delhi, a plan which will provide a house for every one who works in this great city the capital of our Republic. We want to do so, not because we want it as a show-piece to the foreign observers, but we want to do so, because we have a duty by our people. We have to do so because certain things which had been denied to these people must no longer be denied to them. We want to do so because we want to raise the living standards and conditions of our people. We are guided by the Directives of our Constitution in this matter and by the considerations of well-being of our people, and that is what is important in this connection.

For this reason, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I would have been in favour of restricting the construction of palatial buildings. Unless they are indispensable for Government purposes, I would not allow landlords, private persons putting up big residential houses and then letting them out at heavy rents. This is not the time for permitting such luxurious constructions, when people are sleeping on pavements, when people are sharing these slums with animals and when many thousands of our people do not have a roof to live under when that is the condition, we cannot allow building materials, steel, cement and all that, to be used up in such constructions for the rich, which they can forgo for the time being.

We cannot allow building materials like steel, cement and all that to be diverted to the rich for their houses which they could forgo for the time being now. Delhi is the capital of India, but does it speak well of our Capital that in contrast to this dismal picture of slums and sufferings, you are having your building materials and other things for construction of big and palatial houses for the rich and for purposes which can wait till we have found houses for every working man in this country? That does not speak well of you. I do not know how a right minded foreigner would feel if you tell him this story. This is not a story

which would easily escape note. Nobody would miss it. You know that in England under the various Governments there was some priority given to the construction of working class houses; in other countries too this had been done but in our country it seems that the palaces go up while the slums continue and the people are condemned to live in them for years on end. This is a record which brings no credit to the Government. Therefore the restriction should be there. I said this thing because I know that all kinds of excuses would be given that there is no cement, that there is no steel, that there is no finance, etc. All these excuses should not at all be accepted because if we save on the buildings that are coming up for the rich and use them for the poor we will have ample material to build such houses for the poor. About finance, I see that the allocation made in the Second Five Year Plan is very meagre as far as housing is concerned. I say this thing because until and unless finances are provided, the Home Minister cannot build houses. The Home Minister can produce any number of candidates for the Congress elections and make all kinds of choices that he likes but he cannot produce houses until and unless he is provided with the necessary finances, the necessary construction materials and all that. Therefore, I shall be on his side if he were to demand more allocation for housing, more allocation for urban and even rural housing—for the present we are concerned with housing in Delhi—but there is no such thing in the Second Five Year Plan and the other documents that are there. There is little that has been provided for drastic improvement in this direction. Therefore, what I fear is that there will not be any real re-making of the city of Delhi; there will be some changes here and there, some spotty changes in certain areas—one spotty change in one area and another spotty change in another area—in order to present a new and rising India in a particular way to some foreign visitor and nothing beyond that will be done if the Government does not change its policy. Therefore, a change in this respect is necessary. I would ask this question of the Hon. Minister: What happens if the slums are not cleared and if the landlords fail to execute the directions of the Government? Now, you have all kinds of penalties but what happens to those dwellers there? Who undertakes to improve

their lot? How would the money be realised and who will be made to pay for the improvement and how quickly would such improvements be effected? This is the question that I would like him to answer when he replies to the debate. Then again if certain areas are cleared, where would the people go and live? Government have to find alternative accommodation for such people. Is there any scheme for such alternative accommodation? As far as I can make out, there is no such scheme. I think, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that unless and until side by side with this measure, Government devises schemes of alternative housing which should go on expanding all the time, there will be difficulties for the people to find shelter and I think there may be some crisis even with regard to housing in the end. That is what I fear I suggest that Government should earmark certain areas wherein construction for accommodating the city poor should immediately start. Now, this should go on simultaneously and Government should compel the landlords to improve the slum areas so that they are brought up to certain standards. This is how the work should be managed. After all, in the final analysis, we will have to abandon this plan and build anew, build new houses, houses of the modern type and fitted with all modern amenities at least with the minimum of the modern amenities for the dwellers. That is how Government should view this matter. I would now give you an example.

I live in one of the bungalows given to Members of Parliament and I live in Delhi, of course. One day a person came and said that he would do some-thing, some sort of repair of something. Then I said, "Nothing particular is wrong". He went to the bathroom and said that he would use mosaic for flooring instead of what was there. It is a very good bathroom and one could have a very fine bath in that bathroom but now orders had been passed for replacing the present arrangement with mosaic flooring for the Members of Parliament. I say that we can wait; members of Parliament can wait till the other measures are taken for the city poor. Now, money is being wasted in these kinds of useless luxurious renovations for the houses of the Members of Parliament and I suppose in other houses also while the city poor live in their slums in a

state of utter neglect and un-speakable misery. How you allow such things to happen even in this capital is a thing that I do not know. How would a foreign visitor feel if he were told this particular story? He will not be very much enchanted by the performance of the Government in regard to this matter. I tell you, Government is wasting a lot of funds on non-essential housing whereas essential housing goes by default and is neglected. This is what I want to say and I make this charge with all sense of responsibility and I would be very happy if this charge could be proved to be unfounded or false. Everybody in Delhi knows that the housing problem has become extremely acute and Government pays no attention to it. We know also how Government pays attention to the housing of the rich—I will not include the Members of Parliament amongst the rich—and the Members of Parliament. I want Members of Parliament to be accommodated in good decent houses and, as you know, when this matter was discussed some four years ago, we suggested that small little flats, one roomed tenements for humble Members of Parliament like us would be good enough and I think it would be good enough for others also who have dedicated themselves to the service of the nation. We do not find any such thing; we find that big constructions are going on. I would like the Government to go into this question particularly. I do not want the Members of Parliament to be put to inconvenience because they have to perform certain functions and discharge certain responsibilities and they deserve certain kind of amenities for their work. I am prepared to concede that but beyond that I am not prepared to go. As far as the hon. Ministers are concerned, I do not know but the hon. Member said that the hon. Ministers should not live in such big houses and all that....

* * * *

(Time bell rings.)

Now, here again, you see such huge palaces, big houses, being given to them no matter who lives there, how many souls are inside. I think this is not a good exhibition of moderation or social justice. In any case, it does not set a good example

when there is neglect elsewhere. I am not at all suggesting that they should also move into the houses in which we are living. If I were to be a Minister, I would not mind living in the house in which I am now living. It is quite comfortable for me and for people like me.

Nevertheless I can only say this that here is a point which requires your consideration. All this I say because until and unless you have an integrated scheme a scheme in which every requirement has to be fitted in, you will not have any improvement in the matter of housing at any rate the kind of improvement that we all desire. Now about other houses, I think the Government should take an inventory and prepare a list of all the big palaces and private residential houses and see as to how they could be utilised. During the war we knew in Calcutta the houses were requisitioned for providing shelter to the Government employees but here the employees of this present Government go without shelter when big houses are being used by a few people who do not need them at all. This, I call, gross social injustice. The Government can take steps in this direction and requisition some of these houses and find shelter for the employees who have not got any shelter today. These are the suggestions that I can make. As far as slum clearance is concerned, I emphasise again that what we need today is a housing programme for new constructions, that will in the near future replace the existing slums which are beyond repair and beyond improvement. Let there be no mistake about it.

* * * *

I would therefore, suggest that the Government should direct its mind towards the preparation of such schemes. We must come to grips with the housing problem; we must fight these slums and fight in a human way, in a vigorous manner so that those people who have been condemned to live there are no longer condemned to live there and so that we find better housing for them, so that they live as one of us with at least the minimum necessary amenities of modern civilisation and civic life.

Conference of World Powers on Nuclear Test Explosions*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I rise to support the resolution together with the suggested amendment by Shri Krishna Menon. As far as the question of suspension of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons and their ultimate ban goes, there is the completest unanimity in the country, and on that subject I do not think I need dilate very much because the unanimity covers not only the common people but also the Government. They are all at one in demanding that these tests be suspended and that steps be taken to prohibit the production of atomic and other forms of nuclear weapons.

I would like to introduce another subject in the course of this discussion, perhaps, somewhat controversial in the context of the present situation. Yet, Sir, it is important to raise that issue, because it is not enough merely to say that we want the suspension of these tests, that we all want the atomic weapons and nuclear weapons to end, that we want mankind to be rid of the great threat that hangs over its head. These are general issues on which there is no disagreement, at least, in our country happily. But what I have to say is, why is it that in spite

*From debate on Private Member's Resolution Regarding the convening of a Conference of World Powers to consider measures to halt nuclear test explosions, Rajya Sabha, 24 May, 1957, cc. 1490-1497.

of the overwhelming weight of public opinion in support of the demand there is no suspension of these tests? How is it that one power which belongs to the Commonwealth—and India is also a part of the Commonwealth—defies not only the wishes of the various peoples of the Commonwealth countries but also, being a constituent government of the Commonwealth, has carried out its recent test on Christmas Islands the other day? What is it that comes in the way of banning atomic and nuclear weapons? These are the questions that we must face today? I know that different understanding and analysis exist, it is understandable that over this issue there would be different approaches also, but nevertheless the issue has to be faced to begin with.

Before I proceed further I think, perhaps, a word or two is necessary with regard to the destructive power of the atomic and nuclear weapons. I would only like to read out what Mr. Gavin, one of the Chiefs of the American Army Research and Development Department said. According to him “several hundred million deaths” would result from radio-activity if the United States ever launched on a full scale nuclear assault on any aggressor. Casualties would extend to friendly areas outside the enemy territory. This is what an American expert on the subject had to say. Prof. Rotblatt, one of the eminent scientists in England, said that as a result of the tests which had already taken place thousands will die and millions may die. Others have called it propaganda and not scientific statement. I am not going into all that because I think that the scientists are in a better position to speak on this subject than those nuclear maniacs who are preparing atomic and hydrogen bombs and threatening mankind with extinction—I have in mind the imperialist powers, Britain and the U.S.A. This is the position and the radioactivity is something which affects all of us. We particularly in this part of the world are affected because they are taking place in the Pacific, and we are likely to be more affected by these tests and the radiation of these tests than the western countries or the people who live in that part of the world. Naturally, we are a little more concerned about it,

and more so the Japanese people. I think it is a matter of great satisfaction today that when the Japanese Prime Minister is amongst us in our country as our guest, we are discussing this subject which has agitated the whole of Japan. Today the Japanese people and the Government are united in demanding that these tests be ended. Tomorrow, I think when he sees the papers, he will find that we in Parliament fully support the views of the Japanese people in this matter and join our voice with theirs in demanding the prohibition of atomic weapons and immediate suspension of the tests. This is the kind of hospitality which would best suit the occasion, and we are glad that today—thanks to Mr. Govinda Reddy*—that we are in a position to offer this hospitality in the shape of the resolution we are discussing in this House during his presence in this city and in this country.

Now, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I can understand the sentiments and feelings when we demand that these tests be ended by all powers who are engaged in them. There should not be any discrimination that way and I do not have the slightest doubt that all those who make such demands are motivated by the noblest sentiments for humanity and for the defence of civilisation. Therefore, on that score there is no controversy whatsoever, and when we point out that the Soviet Union, the U.S.A. and Britain are carrying out these tests, we are stating a fact, an unassailable fact. We would like all these tests to go. In fact, we are a party to the Declaration of the Berlin Bureau of the World Peace Council which says:

“The United States and the Soviet Union are continuing the atom bomb tests, Great Britain is joining it. We demand that these tests should cease. We demand an immediate truce.”

This is the appeal of the Bureau of the World Peace Council and this appeal has become the demand of peace-loving

* Mover of the resolution.

mankind all over the world. We are also trying to play our part in bringing about the mobilisation of public opinion that is so essential for fighting against this menace.

But, I think the problem is much more complicated than this. It is not enough just to name three Powers which are carrying out the tests. We must tell our people frankly as to what are the factors that stand in the way of preventing these tests and prohibiting the production and use of atomic and nuclear weapons. There, I join issue with some of our friends opposite. They seem to think that all these three Powers fall in the same category as far as the question of how to prevent these atomic and nuclear tests is concerned. There are, on the one hand, the United States of America and Britain; on the other hand is the Soviet Union. They call them two Power blocs. This is the position. This is very important—the Soviet Union on the one hand and the United States and Great Britain on the other, because it is necessary to understand it in order that we can adopt correct policies and concretise our sentiments into proper types of action that is necessary to achieve the objectives that we all commonly share and stand for.

It has been pointed out that in 1945, it was the United States of America that did the insane act of dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was justified on this score that it was necessary to do so to win the war against Fascism. Now, it is a settled fact of history that for defeating Fascism and winning the war, resort to such destructive weapons was not necessary. They knew that Fascist Japan was brought to its knees and was defeated not by this terrorism, mass massacre and inhuman attack by atomic weapons, but by the destruction of the Kwantang forces which were the mainstay of the Japanese fascist army.

Then, Sir, in his Fulton speech, Mr. Churchill returned to the subject and I think, referred to the importance and efficacy of atomic weapons. Then followed the tests. Immediately after we had certain tests in 1952, I think, in Nevada, and in 1954 in the Bikini Island, carried out by the United States of America. Then you had a demonstration of threats of atomic weapons being

used in the Korean war by the United States of America and the same threat was repeated in the war in Indo-China. This is also a well-known fact. Then there is the NATO Council which developed and shaped its strategy and on the basis of atomic weapons, statements after statements were made from the NATO Council that they were going to have big military build-ups. This was based on their strategy and tactics of atomic and nuclear warfare. Only recently there was the Bermuda Conference where the British Prime Minister met his superior, President Eisenhower, Britain went there to regain some of its lost prestige, for a little face-saving and to regain something which it was losing to its senior partner in this Imperialist combination. Immediately after the conference, statements were issued to the effect that these two Powers had no intention of giving up the preparation of atomic and nuclear weapons and in fact, they declared their approval for such a preparation. And you know, Sir, it was announced that Britain would be having atomic war-heads and missiles so that it could become a war-base—atomic and nuclear war-base—against certain countries. Against which country is well known. After all, Britain is not being supplied by the United States across the seas to wage war against France or some other western country. It is clearly known that these preparations are going on against the Soviet Union. Today, they call it a 'deterrent'. There has been a reduction of conventional weapons and this is reshaping the entire strategy of Britain. Now, Britain is equipping herself with atomic and nuclear weapons. In the *New York Times* of April 7, 1957, I think, it was stated quite clearly that "Britain is to prepare deliberately for an atomic war." This is something which is not said by any Communist paper, but by the *New York Times* which is all sympathy to the British Imperialist. It is they who declared this. Then, a White Paper was issued by the British Government during the debate on foreign affairs in the House of Commons. It was stated there: "The free world is today mainly dependent, for its protection, upon nuclear capacity of the United States." That is to say, Britain depends on the United States and upon the nuclear weapons it produces. This is clearly stated in the White Paper. It is further stated in it that "Britain is responsible

for the defence of Aden Colony and Protectorate, that she will maintain a bomber squadron in Cyprus 'capable of delivering atomic weapons.' Here is a clear programme of atomic weapons not only for the so-called 'deterrent', but for equipping the armed forces of the British Empire in Asia and Africa so that atomic weapons could be used in suppressing the struggles of the people for their national liberation, so that these could be used for crushing the independence and sovereignty of these countries. We are deeply concerned over this development because, here we say, Britain is following an atomic strategy with a view to maintaining its Empire. Everyone knows that in the process, every engagement which Britain would undertake would be a nuclear engagement, would be an atomic engagement or at least would be accompanied by a threat of atomic and nuclear war. That is the position to which Britain has come today.

Now, these are the facts that are to be noted by this Government, especially when India is a partner in the Commonwealth. I do not go into this matter. We have got the Eisenhower Doctrine. They have got in Taiwan nuclear weapons. Supplies of atomic materials are being made to various other countries in order to create a ring against the Soviet Union and for threatening the people should they rise against Imperialist domination. As against that, the Soviet Union has expressed time and again its desire to ban completely atomic and nuclear weapons. Our Prime Minister suggested that there should be a suspension of tests of weapons. Recently, the Soviet statesmen has declared that in case the Western Powers do not consider it possible to completely prohibit nuclear tests, they should at least conclude an agreement on the temporary cessation of such tests. Mr. Zorin made it clear that the Soviet Union would be prepared to suspend the tests and that this need not be linked with the general question of disarmament, which question the United States raises with a view to side-tracking the immediate issue. The position of the Soviet Union is quite clear that they are prepared for suspending tests immediately. If their proposal for complete ban is not

acceptable, let the tests be suspended so that in a favourable atmosphere there can be more discussion for an amicable settlement with regard to complete prohibition and banning of all the atomic weapons. That is the position which the Soviet Union takes in regard to this matter. I think we should try to prevail upon the Governments of the United States and Britain to agree to the Soviet proposal. I do not say that whatever the Soviet Government says should be accepted by our Government. All that I say is that it is the American and British policy of preparing for war on atomic and nuclear basis that is coming in the way of a peaceful agreement. It is the systematic and persistent refusal by Britain and the United States that comes in the way of preventing the tests and banning the atomic weapons. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I think these are the questions which have to be gone into and I would ask the Government not merely to take a sort of very general view about this matter. General view is all right. But what is important is that we must decide on our attitudes and strike against those who are responsible for the continuance of this menace. I think it is possible for us to bring about that measure of popular support which is necessary and assert the moral weight of India so that mankind is rid of atomic and nuclear threat and, ultimately of nuclear destruction.

Economic Development*

We are an industrially backward country, and backwardness does not mean that certain States are forward while others are backward. It means essentially and generally we are backward.

Then a particular question arises. As between the States, certain States perhaps have got more facilities or access to industrialisation or have got development in that direction, others have not. Then, even in the developed States there are areas which are neglected and areas which are not so neglected. Therefore, it is an overall problem and it is to be viewed from that angle. The questions of provincialism, parochialism or the North *versus* South do not arise in the scheme of things. For example, Assam is a neglected area. For example, West Bengal, which is advanced if you look at Calcutta, is neglected if you look at the village area. Bombay is an advanced area if you go round the city of Bombay, but the moment you enter Ahmedabad, the moment you enter into the interior of Maharashtra or Gujarat, you find that it is an area of neglect. That is not a question to be taken as a provincial question or a question relating to South *versus* North.

The question of location of industries is a very very important question. What we want to stress in this Resolution on the establishment of an Expert Committee to study development problems of economically under-developed States is that this question has to be thought afresh, though afresh not in general terms but with due regard to the concrete needs of various States, of various areas, of various regions.

*From Debate on Private Member's Resolution regarding Appointment of Export committee to study development of economically underdeveloped states Rajya Sabha 26 February, 1960, cc. 1987—1993.

It is understood—nobody will dispute it—that industrial development, to a great extent, is conditioned by the availability of natural resources and power and fuel and transport facilities. Nobody will deny that. At the same time we are not going to take things for granted, as a finality. After all, power and fuel are something which can be developed even in underdeveloped areas. Similarly transport can be developed. The problem comes only when it is a question of natural resources. For example, we cannot grow tea in areas which are not suited for tea. But then there is perhaps no difficulty for us to develop power stations in many areas if other minimum facilities are available. That is how the problem should be viewed.

The initial hurdle is there, I agree. But that should not be the only factor. Now we have set before ourselves the objective of what we call rapid industrialisation. And rapid industrialisation does not mean, naturally in 'the context of Indian economy, building large-scale industries all over; it is beyond the physical possibility of our economy. It would not be desirable. It would be an adventure if we went in for that kind of thing. We cannot have large-scale industries in our country spread all over. But at the same time it is possible for us to spread throughout the country a whole number of small and medium scale industries in order to make it somewhat even, and in order to eliminate unevenness. That is how we should view this thing. Naturally, when we talk of rapid industrialisation, its pace, we have in mind the question of the location of industries, over and above the question of spreading over small and medium-scale industries throughout the country, specially in the areas where there are none, which are lagging behind in the matter of industrial development.

Now, why do you want rapid industrialisation? We want to raise the standard of living of our people. We want to make our economy model. We want to shift large chunks of our agrarian population to the industrial sector. It is estimated that at the end of the Fourth of the Fifth Five Year Plan our agricultural population would come down from 71 per cent to 55 per cent. Now the question arises where would this population be

absorbed? It would be absorbed in other sectors of the economy, especially in industry.

Now, Sir, the population is growing at the rate of 2 per cent every year, generally speaking. We have to absorb that population. Assam, for example, creates additional labour power every year but is unable to shift it from agriculture to industry. We cannot shift them, shall we say, from Assam to West Bengal or to Bombay. Therefore, if we have to achieve that objective of absorbing more and more population into the non-agricultural sector, it follows that we have to go in for industrialisation with whatever resources we have got in all parts of India. That is the position. From that angle it is important.

Then, Sir, unemployment is growing apace, and according to the working papers that are coming to us in connection with the Third Five Year Plan, it would be a huge problem at the end of the Third Five Year Plan. With so much of pressure on agriculture, we cannot create employment opportunities unless and until medium and small-scale industries are spread throughout the country, especially in the areas which are not looked after well. There again comes the question of solving the problem of unemployment and of utilising this unused labour power for our industrial and economic development. It becomes a vital necessity that we develop these underdeveloped areas and pay special attention to them.

Coming to the question of resources, under the Constitution and in the present financial set-up of India, we see that the States suffer for want of resources. Yesterday, Dr. B.C. Roy presented his Budget to the West Bengal Assembly. He requested the Centre to stay the recovery of loans taken by the West Bengal Government. Even West Bengal is not in a position to balance its budget, to find resources, and has asked the Centre to delay the recovery of the loans. That is the position. You can imagine what will be the position in other States which are economically backward, with resources much more meagre than the resources of West Bengal or Bombay.

Now, unless we have small-scale industries and other medium-scale industries in the public sector we cannot have the resources. Unless we support that line of development we cannot look forward to a developing economy. When we come to the question of having sufficient resources, we come to the obvious question of canalising the domestic investment. The rate of domestic investment is supposed to rise from 8 per cent to 11 per cent. Now how are we to get further resources? Are we to go on imposing more and more taxes on the people, or are we to find the money from the industrial and other activities in the State sector? If the latter part of my observation is correct, we shall have to have more money from other sectors, non-conventional sectors. As far as our economy is concerned, it becomes our inescapable task that we have to develop small scale and medium industries. Who comes in the way? The capitalists come in the way ... They are trying to concentrate the industrial development and financial activity in certain places because it suits them. There are the Titans and giants in the field—the Bombay mill-owners—and the Calcutta mill-owners—and they think that everything should be concentrated there because there are the banking facilities. They operate all over India and they have other transport facilities. The motivation behind all this is, of course, profit. They do not care two hoots if out of hunger and poverty of the people they could build their fortunes and their millions. They do not care two hoots if they can ride to prosperity even if they are to ride on the shoulders of the people. It is these gentlemen who control, in a big way, the financial policy of the country, influence and direct it and condition it. These are the people who want that industry should be concentrated in certain areas. It is built-in field of monopolist capital. It is a built-in field of unequal and uneven concentration of economic power, as it is presently sought, in the location and concentration of industrial units in certain areas, especially in an underdeveloped and backward country like ours. This is what the British did. The whole of India was open to them for exploitation but they concentrated in Bombay, Calcutta and certain other places with a view to earning easy money. They come in the way. Therefore it is

necessary that in the matter of capital issues, this aspect has to be taken into account. How does it happen? Many of the capital issues are really for the expansion of existing industries with a view to making a giant a bigger giant, with a view to developing the monopolists. The textile mills of Messrs. Birla Brothers will be developed and the capital issue will be there and that is how expansion will take place. This is distorted industrial development. Suppose we do not allow it or divert it to go to Assam so that something could be developed there, or in Bihar or Orissa for the matter, there will be smaller units but more numerous units, giving employment to many people and, of course, in the bargain, it will break the power of the monopolists and reduce the power of the monopolists elements. Therefore they want this concentration there.

Managing agencies, concentration of economic power, concentration of trade, concentration of banking, concentration of industry are all common features of monopolist capital. Now in a planned development when we want to build our country, when we want to uplift the backward into better conditions, when we want to minister to the needs of the hitherto neglected areas like Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Assam, Orissa, even Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, etc., we have to reshape our entire policy of rapid industrialisation as far as the location of industries is concerned. That is how the matter should be viewed.

Taking banking, for example, I have gone through the papers. Rs. 200 or Rs. 300 crores are lent to various people. Who are these? Some small monopolist elements, some definitely small number of business people, but fiscally operating in a wider sense, covering the entire market, take these advances. Assam, Orissa, etc. do not get these facilities, they do not have the advances, they do not have money and naturally money tends to flow in the direction where profit is secure, where security is greater, where assurance is there, and especially, where there is connection between banking companies and the industrial capital, it gets completely locked up. This is the position.

I come to consumer goods industries. It was envisaged in the Plan that there should be more consumer goods industries in our country to meet consumer requirements. Yes, it is essential but that again requires re-planning of the location of industries. We have to have more consumer goods industries in the medium and small sectors spread over this country. This is how this country should be viewed and, finally, I would add that this cannot be done until two things are decided upon. Firstly, development must take place in the public sector; emphasis should be on the public sector because the capitalists will never develop it. Secondly, there should be diversion and dispersal of industrial capital in the country and that will be possible only when the banking industry is nationalised and the Government occupies a dominant and commanding position not only in the planning of our economy but also in the administration and working of our economy as a whole in the economic field.

Promotion of Hindi Language*

Mr. Vice-Chairman, I am not very much competent to speak on a subject like this, and naturally there will be very eminent friends here speaking on the various aspects of the proposition before us. But even as a layman I have something to say about the promotion of Hindi in the country, because under clause 6 of this Bill the tasks and the functions of the Sammelan** are stated, and they cover a very wide field in respect of the propagation and promotion of this language.

At the very outset, I should like to say that not only this particular institution but there are various other institutions associated with other languages of great importance in the country, national languages as given in our Constitution, which should also receive the same recognition and the same status as this is being given, that is to say, they should also be given, wherever there is the need for it, the status of a national institution or institution of national importance. I say this because in our country other languages also have to flourish. They are flourishing languages just as this is, I do not deny it, but at the same time the State should take special care in encouraging efforts not only at the Government level strictly speaking but also at the non-official level, which means in such cases among other things institutions and so on.

Now, questions may be asked tomorrow in the country that when this particular institution is being regarded as an institu-

*From the discussion on the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Bill, Rajya Sabha, 15 March, 1962, cc. 413-431.

**The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

tion of national importance, why other institutions, like institutions, should not be given the same status. If that question is raised, it is to be met with a reasonable and satisfactory answer....

About the working of this institution, we have not known very much, we have not been told very much. Yet it is half a century old. It is quite clear, therefore, that an institution which has a history of half a century should be discussed in the light of its experiences. The only thing that we have been told about so far is that two factions as in other spheres also worked in this institution and a receiver had to be appointed. It does not speak well of cultural institution. Certainly when such a situation arises, the Education Ministry cannot shut its eyes to it, the Government cannot shut its eyes to it. They have to take care of the institution and try to resolve the problems. But then we must know the problems in their entirety. Dr. Sapru told us about the two groups. When I hear of groups either in politics or in institutions of this kind, I get frightened because then something is basically wrong somewhere and we must strike at the very roots of things. Government can undoubtedly extend its protective wings to such institutions but if the groups remain groups or if the groups find their projection into the governing bodies under one pretext or another, then the institution goes under. This is what I say. Now, we shall naturally watch how they function under the new arrangement but then it is necessary to find out also how the groups came about, how they behaved in this matter, whether they were liberal or conservative, whether somebody tried to impose something upon others and whether certain advantages that these institutions brought—patronage, *etc.* offered—were sought to be utilised in a narrow manner or they were being handled with care. All these things should be known to us. Perhaps, in such a case when the Government sponsors a measure of this kind, it would be useful—and it is for the Government to consider for the future—if they give us a kind of a memorandum about the working of the institution, because we should like to know from the Government memorandum exactly what their reading of the functioning of such institutions is so that we can reflect over this

matter and give whatever suggestions we can, because these are not partisan issues at all. These are common issues and we do not speak over such matters in a party spirit or on party lines. The Statement of Objects and Reasons containing three or four paragraphs does not give us much light, the kind of light we would like to have over this matter. Therefore, we suffer from this deficiency and people like us speaking here would be all the more handicapped because, as I said, our knowledge of the working of such an institution is undoubtedly limited.

Now, the question has arisen about the promotion of Hindi. Well, we are all agreed that Hindi is the official language of the Indian Union, the language between the States and so on for communication, *etc.* It is not a language that subverts other languages or replaces them. It goes side by side with the other languages. But since we have got many languages, it becomes a kind of *lingua franca* in a limited sphere in our country and this is necessary also, I agree, in the context of national or emotional integration. But, Sir, since I have mentioned the words 'emotional integration', I understand that there is a committee for what is called emotional integration or whatever it is. There you have got very conservative people. The Chairman of that Committee, Dr. Sampurnanand, is a highly dogmatic and conservative person. Every time he utters a word disintegration in life takes place because he is carried away by political prejudices. Imagine a person who is on the Emotional Integration Committee starting to speak against the Communist Party or this party or that party in this manner, as if we are B class citizens. Well, such people should not be placed in such a position at all. I would ask the Ministry of Education to consider whether such narrow-minded, conservative dogmatists should be placed in bodies or institutions whose function is, among other things, to bring about the integration of the minds and thoughts of people and so on. I say this thing because we have a lot of experience.

Here I undoubtedly stand for the promotion of Hindi. I am not one of those who are off and on against Hindi but at the same time I would like this approach to be changed in many ways. I

have no special person in mind but I have a school of thought in this field with which I propose to deal. Yes, we stand for the promotion of Hindi, and I would like to see that the Hindi language prospers in every part of India and that ties are created between the Bengalis and the Hindi-speaking people or between the Malayalees and the Hindi-speaking people, so that we get a language through which we communicate from the North to the South and so on. The Bengalis and the Malayalees can communicate through a language such as Hindi. Some day it should be like that. We should get rid of English that way. I entirely agree there. But the question is of the approach. I am making no reflection at all, I do not know about them very much. But when you get these institutions under the control of some groups and so on, they tend to become conservative in their approach. They do not think about the need for adopting certain other things. That is to say, the Hindi language, in order to spread out all over the country, to embrace the other linguistic groups, must be in a mood to adapt itself as far as possible within its four corners, to the languages spoken in other parts of the country. Now, if you declare a kind of war against any Bengali word or any Malayalee word or even an English word, whatever it is, even when it can easily adopt it, then of course, you are creating difficulties, creating in the first instance prejudices and resistance on the part of large sections of people, thereby obstructing the rapid promotion of the language. I am afraid that such tendencies are visible because there are many ways of spreading it. You can have a liberal approach; you can have at the same time a very rigid, conservative approach in this matter. Once you have a conservative approach, then the task becomes difficult and it is a self-defeating process in the sense that the people develop a kind of resistance towards it. Whatever might happen in future, that is so. Now, that has to be borne in mind. I am no scholar here but there are scholars. But some scholars are, according to me, very conservative, if I may say so with all respect. I have travelled also fairly widely in the country and I find that one of the reasons why there is resistance to the suggestion of this kind of promotion of Hindi is that certain things are sought to be

imposed. Those who do it may not know that they are imposing something. But the trouble is, those who are supposed to be influenced, well, they feel they are being imposed upon. This is the trouble. Now, the test here should be objective, not subjective; that is to say, the test is not how far I think I am working in the matter of promotion of Hindi, but the test is whether we really promote Hindi in the South, the test is how the people of Tamil Nadu or the people of Andhra or the people of Kerala react to my methods, to my approach. This should be the test, and I can tell you, Sir, that in this respect the promoters—some promoters at any rate of the Hindi language—have been found too wanting. Somehow or other they do not take adequately into account this objective aspect of the matter. Now this, I think, should be borne in mind.

Then our Constitution has special mention of the Hindi language. How long it will take to promote it? I am not for imposition; I am certainly for acceleration of the process—not for imposition. But if we leave it to such institutions alone—I am not saying we are leaving it to this institution alone—then not much will be done. This is what I say, because there cannot be a monolithic structure for the promotion of Hindi, that is to say, we simply have a central institution just to radiate its wisdom, knowledge and learning in all parts of the country—it cannot happen that way. Undoubtedly it has a function to play. What about creating centres in other parts of the country which will function in a proper manner taking fully into account the environment and circumstances there? This is very very important. We can think of a temple in a central place and the pilgrims and devotees will come there, but we cannot think of an institution of this kind whether on the banks of the Jumna in Allahabad or somewhere else where all the aspirants for the promotion of Hindi can flock together—it cannot happen. Life will rule it out because people have got other avocations and so on, and everyone likes to work in his own sphere. Therefore, it is important to see that there are many centres created in the country giving all care and attention for the promotion of the Hindi language. But I see this is not being done. Government can certainly spend some money, and I know moneys are being

spent. I think on our part there is something called the Hindi Prachar Samiti—I do not know what kind of prachar it has made—but somehow or other people have a dislike for it. Now, I am not saying which is right or which is not right, but those who stand for the promotion of Hindi should certainly deeply look into the reason why people have taken not so kindly to institutions of this kind that function in the various States. What is coming in the way of establishing a bridge between them on the one hand, and the people—other linguistic groups—on the other has to be carefully studied. I am afraid things are taken for granted and the pros and cons of an approach or a policy relating to a problem of this kind are not gone into more decisively than at present.

Then, Sir, the Hindi language, in order to attract people from other language groups, must establish a kind of communion with the literature of the particular languages of the other groups. For example, if you want to promote Hindi in West Bengal, you naturally will have to give many of the things from the Hindi literature and from the literature of other languages, but at the same time, certainly, you will have to take something from the Bengali literature. Various books are there, stalwart writers are there. Not only should you physically employ them but the creations of arts in Bengal have to be assimilated, as far as possible, within the scope of these institutions. This is very very important. Now, suppose this institution takes on the task of translating certain Bengali books in Hindi in order, in the first place, to facilitate the promotion of Hindi in West Bengal and, secondly, to bring about more integration, they should send these books to other parts where Hindi is read, and *vice versa*. Now comes the selection of books. Which kind of books you will be selecting from the literature of Bengal or of Maharashtra, or from the Bengali or Marathi or Telugu or Tamil or Malayalam literature? This is very very important. Regarding this I had a talk with some Hindi scholars, who are not conservative minded, if I may say so, who had more receptive minds, and they told me that there is a tendency to take them from the somewhat conservative literature, and you see the conservatives flock together and therefore, if you are conservative

here in the institutions the tendency is to pick and choose from, say, the Bengali literature, which answers the approach here, that is to say, some conservative literature which does not have much appeal to large sections of the people, or does not create much impression among the people. You can just translate as many copies as you like, choose as many titles as you like if you have the money, but you do not make any kind of impression on the people there. This is one of the complaints made by some. Now, even in the literature that is published in the Hindi language, care should be taken to see that it becomes very very broad-based, that is to say, it must approximate to and even embrace the other literature—it must not live in its own shell. After all, in order to promote Hindi, you have to get beyond the confines of the Hindi-speaking region. You have to have before you the horizon of non-Hindi people, the Malayalam people for example, people who do not know anything about it yet but who have got their language and their literature somewhat developed. Now that horizon has to be broadened. That again is a very important matter as far as the promotion of Hindi is concerned. Otherwise it will always look like imposition even though the promoters may not mean so. But I find that there is some deficiency in this respect.

Then there is the question of what kind of literature you are bringing out. Now, the world is dynamic; minds are really receptive to new ideas; people change; the younger generation does not live in the generation in which our esteemed friends—some of them venerable promoters of Hindi—live and lived at one time. The younger generation, those of 14, 15, 16 years of age, well they live in a modern world. They want to read and see things which appeal to them—I am not talking about the vulgar side of it—I mean the good side of it. They want to see that you bring out that kind of literature which will cater to their needs, actual and potential, to the needs of the generation that is coming. That is also of great importance. Our younger generation thinks in terms of going to outer space; they are not thinking in terms of what Indra said, of Indra who was threatening to fight from the clouds—not like that—these are

mythical things—and so on in our literature. It is all right; have it by all means, but that is how they think; their mind is attuned gradually to scientific ideas. Therefore, it is necessary that, whatever you produce is produced having an eye on the changing times, the changing moods, the changing requirements of the receptive minds of the younger men or the younger generation. May I say that in this respect also there is a flaw, there is conservatism, and I think one of the reasons why we are coming up against difficulties in the matter of promotion of Hindi—to speak philosophically—is conservatism, and I think Hindi promoters must overcome conservatism in this matter, alike in their approach as well as in their ideas—I do not mean any ill, but there are certainly some who need a little introspection in this matter in the interests of the cause to which they are undoubtedly very genuinely devoted.

Then you see here under clause 6 so many tasks are given, and everybody knows that promotion of Hindi is a herculean task, and this cannot be done by this institution, very much so when we have difficult problems in this field of work. Undoubtedly, it can do something, but Government should really now think of how they can do it. It should be set right, as I said, at the base. Therefore, in the States, the Central Government should render all adequate assistance for the promotion of Hindi. There comes financial assistance. Now, if you ask the State Governments that they should do so, they would immediately plead their financial difficulties, and they will ask perhaps for a greater share in the divisible tax pool. Therefore, in order to get rid of this complication, it is necessary that the Central Government, since Hindi has been given a special place in our Constitution, spends a little more money, employs a little more of its resources at the State level in the proper way of course for the promotion of Hindi. That should be done. If the Central Government thinks that by recognising this as an institution of national importance it is almost discharging its major function, the Government will be profoundly mistaken. What the Central Government should now concentrate upon is to develop the centres—as I said—in the States, and help those people who are working, including the State Governments, in such matters.

That is very very important. I was told in a number of States by those who are interested in Hindi that adequate assistance was not forthcoming from the Central Government, and also that the approach was not good. Well, about the approach it may be a matter of opinion, but as far as the resources are concerned I think the Central Government will agree, I think Dr. Shrimali* will himself agree, that the resources that are made available to the State Governments or to the institutions in the States are by no means adequate for the task that has been set before them for the promotion of this language. That point has to be borne in mind.

Then, the question is how we can promote it in our colleges and schools. Sometimes when I meet people, especially teachers and students, I ask them this question. Now, there are many people reading Hindi in our schools and colleges. Even in Bengali schools in West Bengal it is being taught. At one time there was some resistance. Now, it has been taken for granted that it should be learnt, but there, again, adequate attention is not being paid. In the first place, proper type of teachers are not given. Secondly, somehow or other it is sought to be just pushed. It cannot be pushed that way. Certainly, you can if you can make it compulsory for those people who sit for the various examinations in Public Service Commissions and others. Hindi or no Hindi they will read it just as I read Latin. I studied Latin in England because of the course I had taken. Mr. Akbar Ali Khan knows it. It was compulsory to study Latin and I did it and immediately after the results were out, I realised that I had forgotten every single thing of it. I passed the examination in Latin all right but immediately after that I forgot everything, I remember not a word of Latin. Latin is more Latin to me than Latin itself, if you ask me that way. It is not promotion, it is demotion of the language, if I may say so. That is how you do it.

Then, Sir, I notice another dangerous tendency today and it is for those who are responsible for it. A kind of conflict is

*Dr. K.L. Shrimali, the then Minister of Education.

developing between the promotion, rather change-over from English to regional languages on the one hand and to Hindi on the other. In some States—I do not say in all; it cannot be in Central India or in States where Hindi is spoken—where the change-over is taking place at higher educational levels from English to Bengali, shall we say, you find the conflict. I know there are some English fans here who would like English to remain in its present status for all time, who accept English language as the only unifying language in our country. I do not accept that English certainly should have a place in our country, especially for understanding science and technology and for maintaining contacts with the world. But the world is also getting divided today that way even linguistically. If you go to one part of the world, today English does not sell very much. You may or may not like Communists but there you have to learn Russian. What can you do if communism comes to certain parts of the world and Russia also produces better scientists and technologists? Such is the position. Some people think that English must remain. I myself cannot speak in Hindi. Even in my election speeches I had to speak unfortunately, in English though that had to be translated in the regional language because I knew if I spoke in Hindi, our votes would be lost. That is why I never spoke in Hindi. But I still maintain that in our country the language, a sort of *lingua franca*, that way in a limited sphere must be Hindi. There cannot be any other language except Hindi. I cannot think of any other language. As a free people who have got a rich cultural heritage and rich literature and language why must we think in terms of having a foreign language as a language that unifies the country or a language of communion between the various linguistic groups? The sooner it goes the better. I want the dethronement of English from that status.

Well, Sir, here I hope I will not be misunderstood by my friends in the South nor do I hope I would be taken to be a rigid partisan by some promoters of Hindi. That is my fear. I am between two stools in this matter, I must say, because I am liable to be misunderstood by either. Sir, I say that Hindi should be there and, therefore, the Government should make every

effort for its promotion. Why can we not do it? We have got love for English language. I know a language dies hard. I know that. But if we had won the battle of Plassey we would not have had English in the present status which it enjoys to-day. It is the historical circumstances that put English in that position. Now, when we are free, naturally English language must have its own place, a place given by us for keeping touch with the outside world and for science and technology and for learning it as a literature. German language should also be studied. Russian language also should be studied. There are other languages also, but English, naturally more, because English-speaking world is a big world and we have already had in this matter a lead in this country. Also, in English we have got something to build upon. Therefore, we retain it but it cannot be a language for all times.

Sir, the idea that English must be there as a vehicle of mutual exchange and understanding between the Tamil people and the Bengali people and so on is wrong. I am surprised that some eminent people in Bengal still maintain that view as also many eminent people in Tamil Nadu. Very soon we will be having real Tamilians here in the list of names for Rajya Sabha.

Mr. Annadurai is one of them. The idea that English is the only language for creating mutual understanding is wrong, if I may say so. This approach is to be fought. But when you fight let us fight it with persuasion. We should fight it for the promotion of Hindi in such a manner that it attracts people and disarms those people who stand for the retention of English in its present status to the detriment of Indian languages or an Indian language of the type of Hindi. We must fight for it properly. Therefore, I say, it is a very important matter. It is not a question of an institution which lives under a receiver. Well, you may have a Board now. The receiver has done his job. But, certainly give it the encouragement that it deserves. But then it is not enough for the Government. I would ask Dr. Shrimali to consider and discuss this matter at the State level. For example, call a conference of educationalists and so on from the States, from all language groups, representing all shades of

opinion and approach on the matter and discuss as to how best we can promote Hindi and make that promotion agreeable to the people whom we want to bring within the fold of this language. That is how it should be done. I do not know of any such conference or mutual discussions being held.

Then, Sir, for the promotion of Hindi there are these scholarships and *Paritoshiks* and so on. But what about very many others who are working in their own small way for the promotion of Hindi? That is not the way of promoting Hindi, if we really give them to the people only at the top. It should not be made into Padma Vibhushan business and confined to the top and others at the bottom continuing to live and work without getting any recognition. It should not be like that. By all means give them *Paritoshiks*. But what about those who are working for the promotion of Hindi and who can do the job better in schools and colleges, in literature, either by way of translation or otherwise? What about giving encouragement and incentives to them, giving promotions to them? It is not a question of giving them small material help. It is a question of recognising the talent and making him feel that the country appreciates the work, the country generally recognises the work that he has done. That is very, very important. But, unfortunately, here again conservatism comes. Conservatism is the dead enemy of our people. Here, again, in the matter of promotion and recognition and *paritoshik* it goes round a small circle. You will ask why I say so. Well, if it is not so, I should immediately come here and plead guilty. But go to a place like Calcutta, Tamil Nadu or particularly Madras and so on and talk to the people there. The people there have their grievances and feelings. Why it is so should be gone into.

Sir, we need a large number of promoters, dynamic-minded promoters who know how to integrate the promotion of Hindi language with the development and flourishing of the language of the region. There should be a common symphony. It cannot be that we strike a discordant note as far as the promotion of the Hindi language is concerned in States and accept that promotion is taking place. Some institutions may come up and

some teachers may be there but it is hardly a promotion of that language.

Therefore, it is necessary to resolve the conflict that may arise or that has arisen in certain parts of the country between the promotion of Hindi and the task relating thereto with, at the same time, a changeover from English to the regional languages, because, as we said before and I say it now it is important today in the State level to make the change-over from English to the regional languages as quickly as possible. The sooner we do it, the quicker we do it the objective possibilities for the promotion of Hindi will be greater and it will be possible for the promoters of Hindi and for the Government to fulfil their responsibilities in a much more effective way than at present. There is no contradiction between the two provided we set about the task in the right way. Therefore, this also has to be borne in mind. As far as the personnel of this body is concerned, I cannot say anything because I do not know many of them. I know only some of them and in this House there are some very good people. I would like to see them here if they have a little tinge of conservatism in them, I think they will overcome that gradually with our affection and touch. But diehard conservatives do not exist in politics only or in England. Diehard conservatives exist even in the field of literature and language. It is all the more dangerous from the cultural point of view for the development of language and culture if we allow the diehard to take command. Therefore I say that we need a little bit of liberalism there, a broader approach, a mind which is receptive to new ideas and which projects itself into the future and does not only cling to the past. Therefore, I would ask Dr. Shrimali, while appointing people like Secretaries, etc., to keep this point in view because some names of the protagonists of Hindi frighten some people in other parts of the country. I have noted it. They have very venerable persons, very respected men, probably almost godly, divine that way but the very names when mixed up with language and its promotion, if you mention the names where Hindi is not spoken, the people there get a little allergic to those names. They become a little scared and frightened. I do not say that people are always right but that is

how people react to it. Those who are promoters, cannot very much progress in the thing by causing mass scale fright or allergy in the people whom they want to draw closer towards them. Lest I should be tempted to mention names, I would leave it and avoid developing the subject further. The hint is obvious. The Education Minister and others must have understood.

Here is Diwan Chaman Lall who has got Oxford and who has Hindi also. Now, I would not think that he would be conservative in the matter of Hindi nor do I think that he is deficient either in Hindi or English. I know how many such people are associated with work of this kind. Diwan Chaman Lall is not of my political persuasion. But then, I will have faith in him in this matter. I do not want to be there because blending of what is good in the past and what is to be received for the future and good in the present, will take place there in such persons. I know of people in West Bengal who became the promoters of the Bengali language but they started promoting the Bengali language in such a Sanskritised way that it repelled all. Nobody took to it. Then gradually it was understood that such professors do not make good professors who lived in the days of old Sanskrit and started giving important lessons in Sanskritised Bengali. Well, Sanskrit is there and it has its place but there again, modern language is not developed that way and if you do not do so, people do not take to that language, more especially those who speak other languages. They do not take it. That should be borne in mind.

I do not wish to say very much. I think the few suggestions that I have made would be considered. I know that I am likely to be wrong in such matters in details but the broad approach I take from the common man. As you know, I come from a language group which is not Hindi. Naturally, I live with the Bengalis and note their reaction. When I go to other parts of the country, for example, South, I also ask my colleagues and comrades as to how the people are reacting to this business of the promotion of Hindi. I do not get always a satisfactory

answer. Things do not seem to be very encouraging to me that way.

Therefore, this has to be discussed at great length, dispassionately, and the Government should find adequate resources. It is the Central Government's job because the Central Government has to provide for it. It is the language of the Indian Union in some respects which is provided for in our Constitution. Therefore, the Central Government has a specific and special responsibility for the promotion of Hindi and naturally they should give assistance to all those who do meritorious work and really help the cause of the promotion of Hindi and at the same time they should help the States and the local centres there but while helping these institutions which are associated with Hindi, they should also, as far as possible, give assistance to the States for changing over from English to the regional language because these are only two sides of the same task. One cannot go without the other. This is how we view this matter. We placed these views before the Language Commission that was appointed on behalf of our Party. We discussed this matter in the entire Party. We threw this matter to be discussed by the entire Communist Party. In the various States discussions took place...

On behalf of my Party I met many people in the different parts of the country, especially in Bengal I collected their views, took down notes and then we had discussions in the Central Committee of our Party and prepared a memorandum as to what should be our approach. More or less the same points were indicated at the National Integration Conference which was attended by our late General Secretary, Ajoy Ghosh, when he spoke on the question of language.

Now, whatever little experience we have gathered through laymen like ourselves in this matter, by our contacts with the people, leads us to the conclusion that in the matter of promotion of Hindi there is need for change in approach, there is need for greater efforts in this field and there is, above all,

need for giving more resources and of course I need not mention, adaptation of the Hindi language to the other languages which is also very essential. The conservatism should go and there should be resilience in language and also it should be receptive to other languages also. You should develop an integrated approach which would be not only confined to certain States and the Central level but it should be spread out to all parts of the country so that before long we can claim that we have found a language for the realities of life, we have found that language and we have established it as a living reality, a language for inter-communication between the various language groups and States in our country. We look forward to this day and this is a task of supreme importance and urgency. I hope the Government will take it up. I hope it will give the necessary assistance to all those who are genuinely liberal and in a right way dedicated to the cause.

Prevention of intrusion of Big Money and use of Government machinery in elections*

We are almost on the threshold of the Fourth General Elections and situated as we are we have to approach the General Elections in the true spirit of having them in a free and fair way. But I am highly apprehensive that we are not going to have the coming General Elections either free or fair because the Congress party, the ruling party, in its utter political and moral bankruptcy, in its disintegration and decline, is not in any mood to see that the elections are held according to the terms of the Constitution. The Constitution will be violated in practice. That is what is my fear. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I have made this suggestion.

The first point that I want to make in this connection is that we should prevent the intrusion of big money into the election.... whether it is Indian or foreign or both. We should prevent the intrusion of this into the elections. Many times we have discussed this matter in the House and now of course, we are discussing it again. But the situation today is far worse than what it was at the time of the First or the Second or the Third General Election. Today big money is making a big bid to

*From debate on Private Member's Resolution on Prevention of intrusion of Big Money and use of Government machinery in elections, Rajya Sabha, 2 December, 1966, cc. 3721 — 3738.

influence the course of the election, to see that the proteges of the big money and high finance are in a position of authority in order to bring this situation about. They want to return as many candidates of big money as possible, no matter at which party level they are, to the State Legislatures and especially to Parliament, to this Parliament because, Parliament is the ruling seat of Power and if today they are in a position—big money argues amongst themselves—to set up a large number of MPs to the Lok Sabha to act on their behalf through the ruling party, they would be in a position to decide as to what the Government should be like, who should be the Prime Minister, who should be which Minister. Therefore, they are taking a very keen interest today. And never before in our history has the intrusion or attempted invasion of big money seen so great as it is at this present moment. We belong to a political party—others also are there—everybody knows it today; in the lobbies outside, in the Press everywhere, there is talk about big money. For the first time, we find that some big capitalist houses are directly putting up their candidates asking the Congress Party to adopt them as the candidates of the Congress Party, elbowing out veteran and old Congressmen. It is well known that in the States today many contractors, capitalists and others, people we have no Congress background, are being given nominations and their case is being advertised and fought for in the ruling circles of the party because they say that it is they who will bring money to the Congress Election Fund. Money and candidate are getting more and more identified. It is being said, unless you accept this and that candidate, moneys will not be coming. And we will at this time because of our difficulty—the Congress argues—require more funds to fight the Opposition to maintain ourselves in majority. That is the situation. Therefore, it is already assuming alarming proportions. Now, in Bihar alone, seven Birla candidates have asked for Congress tickets. They are, Mr. K. P. Modi, General Manager of the Rubi General Insurance Company; Mr. P.D. Himmatsingka who is already there; his brother is also asking for the ticket. Then there is Mr. Khaitan, another Birla candidate, and there are Mr. Khemka, Mr. Chandra

Madhav Singh and Mr. Shib Nath Prasad. These are the names published, which I am giving. Then there are the well-known business houses magnates who are asking for Congress tickets openly and shamelessly and their claims are being entertained by the high circles of the ruling party. And you will be surprised that Mr. Russi Modi, Resident Director of TISCO, is also asking for the Congress ticket. And there is Mr. Pran Prasad of Bird and Company; there is Mr. Shiv Narayan Jayasawal, owner of the Ranchi Distillery; there is Mr. Shyamsunder Bagaria, mica and coal magnate. They are all asking for Congress tickets. Mr. Bindheswari Prasad Sinha is another mica magnate seeking Congress nomination. From my State again, from Calcutta Mr. J.N. Mookerjee, a man of Birla, is asking for a Congress ticket. I can give you many such names but I am not concerned with names. It you go through the Congress list today, you will be shocked, Mr. Chairman. I do not belong to the Congress Party. Well, you may say how am I concerned as to who gets nomination from the Congress Party. It is a plausible question. But we are not concerned here with party matters. Here we are concerned with the intrusion of big money into the coming election openly. Previously they were financing from behind the scene. This time they are producing cash as well as personalities to dislodge others to enable them to come into Parliament and Assemblies in great numbers. You see, Sir, everywhere the Congress and the Swatantra Party are running mutual competition to get hold of the Rajahs and the Ranis as their favourite candidates. I do not know who will win that race. But I believe the Swatantra Party has more of Ranis and the Congress Rajahs. Whether the equation will change I do not know, but the result is the same. That is the position. This is a serious situation. Rajahs and Ranis also have big money again, their privy purse. Maharani Gayatri Devi is not only a Rani, she gets a privy purse of Rs. 18 lakhs apart from the crores and crores of rupees that she has. Now we shudder to think what will happen to the elections. It will be a charge of the big money, a charge of the big money on our Constitutional principle, a charge of the big money on our electoral system, and ultimately on our Parliamentary democracy.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are faced with the charge as some poet mentioned:

"Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them."

May I say, big money to the right, big money to the left, big money in front and big money behind. That is how today we are surrounded on all sides by the big money in the coming elections. It spells a great danger. Mr. Chairman, I say that something should be done about it. An on top of this, this time the American money is coming. Newspapers have reported this and it has not been contradicted....,

Now, Mr. Chairman, it is in the papers that the C.I.A. is intervening in this election is a big way. And am I to brush it aside having regard to what the C.I.A. does in comparable situations of political instability of a dying ruling party and confusion in the leadership in a country? Is it not being said even by Congress Members that behind the demonstration of anti-cow slaughter there might be the C.I.A. hand? Or is it being said by the Communists only? Not at all. There are shared apprehensions. Let us approach it, therefore, from a national, broad, democratic angle.

Mr. Chairman, I would invite your attention to the issues of the *New York Times* which I have brought here except one which I could not get hold of. In the last week of April this year, the *New York Times* published five authoritative, well-documented articles regarding the activities of the Central Intelligence Agency. One of the articles reveals how the C.I.A. operates in various countries, intervenes in politics, shows interest in upsetting governments, putting their Ministers or causing one government to be thrown out and replaced by another government of their choice. This is the content of the four articles here. I have brought them here. I could not bring the third article. I would ask the hon'ble Members of this House to read them. We are thinking of publishing these articles for your benefit at our cost so that you should know what is happening.

Here let me read out from the first article dated the 26th April. As you know, when Singapore was becoming free, the C.I.A. could not rely on the British Intelligence Service; they wanted to recruit their own men, and a man was flown from Tokyo to Singapore to recruit their people and set up C.I.A. activities in Singapore itself. There was a blow-up there and the man was arrested. After that many things happened. A few years later the story came out in the *New York Times*. It is not a Communist paper. To help achieve this they wanted to shield the whole thing. It says:

"To help achieve this purpose, Mr. Lee disclosed the 1960 'affront' without giving any details, except to say that he had been offered a paltry \$ 3.3 million bribe when he had demanded \$33 million."

Then the *New York Times* goes on to say:

"The State Department, which had been routinely fed a denial of wrong doing by C.I.A. officials who did not know of the Rusk apology, described the charge as false. Mr. Lee then published Mr. Rusk's letter of 1961 and threatened also to play some interesting tape recordings for the press."

When Mr. Lee, the Prime Minister, revealed the whole thing the Americans tried to challenge it, then Mr. Lee published Mr. Dean Rusk's letter of apology for the incident that took place. When the Americans wanted to create more fuss, Mr. Lee revealed that he had tape-recordings of the whole thing and he would make it known. This is how the C.I.A. functions. Even before a country became free properly, the C.I.A. went there to put up their men and take advantage of their difficulties, and when they were caught, plenty of money was offered as bribe. According to Americans themselves 3.3 million dollars were offered to the Prime Minister which fact the Prime Minister revealed at a press conference, and when challenged he revealed also that Mr. Rusk had written a letter of apology to him on the subject. This is how the C.I.A. functions. Am I to understand that the same C.I.A., which exists in every country

and which has spread its tentacles all over, will not take interest in our elections in order to influence it and in order to swing elections in a particular direction and see their choicest men come in, no matter which party they belong to. Here again, in the series in the 2nd article dated the 27th April, the *New York Times* writes to say:—

“It is the responsibility of the intelligence division to assemble, analyse and evaluate information from all sources, and to produce daily and periodical intelligence reports on any country, person or situation for the President and the National Security Council, the President's advisory group on defence and foreign policy.”

Now these things are being done. Here in one of the reports you will find that they wanted to murder President Nasser. They had a plot to murder President Nasser. This article is written by the *New York Times*.

Now there are many stories here as to how they intervened in British Guiana, in Congo, in Cuba and various other countries in order to put their men. Today India is their main target because it is the biggest recipient of foreign aid which comes to the developing countries in amount, not per capita. India occupies a special position. If they can undermine India's integrity, India's independence, India's non-alignment, that is a major foreign policy and political gain of the Americans. That is why the Americans today are so interested in intervening in the elections. It is reported in the newspapers that the C.I.A. would be spending about one crore of rupees in the coming general elections. It may be one crore, it may be fifty crores and it may be Rs. 150 crores, I do not know; but the fact remains that there is talk in the town and everywhere that the C.I.A. money is coming and it is also known that large funds have been accumulated with the Americans here on account of the P.L. 480 Funds and so on. The other day it was revealed in the House how the Information Services and the Embassy spent Rs. 48 crores, a huge sum. Where will this money go? Therefore there is every reason to think that the C.I.A. intervention is going to be very big. As far as, our information

goes, the C.I.A. had a hand in the demonstration which took place on 7th November in order to discredit our country, to tarnish our image, to create chaos in the Government, all of which are to the benefit of the C.I.A. agents and the reactionary forces which the C.I.A. exploits. Therefore we are faced with not only the big money from internal sources but big money from the U.S.A. used directly on the scene of election by the C.I.A. agents who are operating in the various parts of the country. Is it to be ignored that Mr. Leonard Vice, Political Counsellor of the U.S. Embassy recently met—he is showing very great interest in the elections—Mr. K.B. Sahay, the Chief Minister of Bihar with some of his friends and other American representatives also met the political leaders of the Congress at Patna. Now as you know, the Bihar Chief Minister has handed over a part of the relief programme of the drought-affected area to the American organisation CARE. It is called CARE—Co-operative American Relief Everywhere. This is an outfit of the State Department, though nominally it is supposed to be co-operative. Such things are going on. I do not know what the Home Ministry is doing. They do not seem to know that such things are going on in the country. Yet everybody knows. Keep a watch on the houses of certain Congress leaders, big ones, and you will see what is there. Big capitalists are coming there for conferences and so on, even American authorities. I reveal to you today that once by mistake a letter reached me which was addressed by a Secretary of the American Embassy to a leading Congressman. It was a misdelivered letter in which it was indicated that special arrangements had been made for him to meet the American Ambassador. Such things are openly going on. Even by post they are using this kind of negotiation and discussion. Therefore, I say, keep that in mind. The C.I.A. is on the scene. The Communists cannot give you very much trouble even if they want to. I should like to give you as much trouble, to the Congress. I should like but we cannot. The C.I.A., with its men entrenched in high positions in the Government, in the Secretariat, in the various other organisations of power, with so much money in their hands, with big business collaboration with them, is a potent threat to everything that we

have built up. This institution will not be entered upon by a Guy Faukes to burn it but this institution, this parliamentary democracy, will be ruined and finished by the non-vigilance, absence of vigilance on the part of the Government and on account of the collusion between some Members of the ruling party with the C.I.A. and other members of certain reactionary Opposition parties in the country. That is the main danger today. Taking advantage of the discontent of the people on the one hand and utter lack of leadership decline, moral and political, of the Congress High Command, the reactionaries, the forces of right reaction, linked up with the Americans are organising a show-down in the Fourth General Elections. That is the grave challenge the nation is facing today and that challenge is seen not only in the anti-cow slaughter demonstration but in various other activities. Therefore, I say that the big money now is coming in a big way, with the C.I.A.'s competent 'cloak and dagger' policy always backing it all along the line. We know the names of the people but we will not divulge it....

*** *** ** ***

Today we find the stooges are coming, contractors are coming but the capitalist is not sure of how they will behave and taking advantage of the situation they are also entering the Parliament. I do not know how many capitalists will sit in the Lok Sabha but we shall see that as few of them as possible return. Now about the State apparatus, it is also being used. The second point in my Resolution is this. I invite your attention to this. I am always backed by documents. This is a photostat of a circular letter written by the Intelligence Branch, Hooghly, dated 30th September, 1966. The photostat appeared in my paper and other papers also. Here it is showing how they look at the elections. The reference is copy of D.O. No. 752(6)/C, dated 27.9.66 from Shri D. Dhar, I.P., Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Burdwan Range, Chingurah to Mr. B.K. Basu, I.P. Superintendent of Police, Hooghly. I do not read everything but only the part relating to the elections....I quote:

"As I have always been telling my officers, serious trouble can always be avoided if strong measures are adopted at the very early stage and a large number of preventive

arrests made with a view to liquidating in good time the fighting potential of the Opposition parties.

I would be garteful if this could kindly be passed on to all your local officers for their guidance."

Now here in this context he writes;

"Would you kindly communicate to all ranks....".

Therefore, there is this part, that the fighting potential of the Opposition parties has to be broken, in the circular letter which is written by the D.I.G., Burdwan Range and sent to all police officials.

Now we are told that Mr. Chavan would see that elections take place in peaceful conditions, but here is a photostat copy of a letter in which the D.I.G. gives instructions to the policemen to break the fighting potential of the Opposition parties by such kind of preventive actions even, and other measures. I should like to know what the Government is doing. Is it not necessary that this man should be immediately dismissed?....

*** *** *** ***

Everybody in Bengal knows that preparations are being made in order to suppress the opposition, create difficulties in the way of the opposition. *Goonda* gangs are also being organised in very many places in order to tackle it. Then, well, I tell you, Mr. S.K. Patil is leading a crusade. He is the chief instrument of authority in the Government, through whom the dark forces of reaction, whether Indian or foreign, are operating. It is not accidental that Mr. S. K. Patil makes it a point of prestige as far as the particular nomination for the North Bombay Lok Sabha Constituency is concerned. Similarly, Mr. Atulya Ghosh, Mr. Sachindra Chaudhuri and many others are engaged, according to my information, in collecting money from the big business for this election. And everywhere this is going on. If I have the time, I can name them. Mr. Ashoka Mehta said after the Second General Elections that Rs. 2 crores were collected by the Congress High Command. Mr. Dahyabhai Patel gave a lot of facts and figures, from the company books, of the Congress

collections last time, before the Third General Elections, which were published, which were reported in the 'Indian Express' which said how the City Congress of Kanpur had collected lakhs of rupees from the Kanpur industrial magnates and presented them at an official function to the Congress leaders of the time, including the late Prime Minister who received Rs. two lakhs from them. Now I can give you very many things like that...and today it is going to happen. Therefore, it is very very important that we do something about it.

Finally, the last point. The repression must end. The emergency must be withdrawn. The Preventive Detention Act must not be passed, must go. The Defence of India rules must be scrapped. It is an utter shame today and as an Indian I feel shame that today we have to conduct the Fourth General Elections in the country under the shadow of emergency, which is supposed to represent an extraordinary condition, and emergency and elections do not go together. The fact that we are holding even General Elections in the country shows that emergency provisions do not operate at all here. It became worn out and out of date long back. Yet we find that the emergency is not revoked and lifted. And why? They want to keep the terror hanging over our heads as the Sword of Damocles. This emergency has created Mr. L. P. Singh. This emergency has created bureaucrats. This emergency has created authoritarianism. This emergency created Nandaji who went down under his sin. Of course advantage was taken by the Rightist forces to get rid of him. Therefore, the emergency should go. All people who had been arrested or are under prosecution should be set absolutely free, and there should be nothing of the kind as detention without trial. Even now M.Ps. are arrested. We are facing difficulties. Our telephones are tapped. Our letters are intercepted and read, and we are shadowed and followed with a view to creating a kind of fear psychosis among the electorate, the public. Therefore, madam Deputy Chairman, I say these are matters for all parties to consider and discuss to day. If the Fourth General Elections are allowed to be conducted in the way of the forces of the Right

reaction with the connivance of this Government—and Government does help it in many places—if the elections take place along their line with the C.I.A. more and more dominating the scene where Mr. S. K. Patil rules over his destiny in this crude and vulgar manner with other Congress reactionaries bringing in big capitalists and monopolists and placing them in Parliament to replace the trusted and tried Congressmen who will go down in the process not only will the country go down in course of time; what will go down immediately thereafter is the parliamentary system itself. We are faced with the greatest danger to the system. It is sought to be degraded. It has been always degraded. Now it is sought to be wrecked and scuttled. And we see the chances of their coming because of this utterly incompetent, unmanly and ridiculous leadership that exists at the Centre now in the matter of elections, and even otherwise. Well, what we see endangered is our very future.

Madam, one word more and I finish. The battles of election lists have started. You see how gloomy the Congress is today. Previously there were no battles of election lists. I told the Congress leader Mr. Thimma Reddy—he is President of the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee—whom I met in the lobby, “Previously you were fighting us. Now it seems there are two fights, one within your party, so far expressed by the battles over election lists, and the other fight against the Opposition.” Now the battle of election lists symbolises the utter corruption and degeneration of the organisation, the absolute absence of principles, and the hankering after office for the spoils of office, and so they are putting up candidates not on merits even from the Congress standard, but from factional and other considerations in order to see whether the syndicate should be stronger, or the syndicate in alliance with Morarji should be stronger, or other groups should be stronger in the new Parliament and in the new Assemblies. Therefore, everywhere the party is in decline, the party is in degradation, the party is in disintegration which is shown by the Janata Congress, Bangla Congress, another Janata Congress, and Dissident Congress, and the dissident Congress is taking the country down and paving the

way for American intervention in our elections. It is paving the way for the Americans and the big business to come together—and indeed they have come together—in order to directly intervene in February next when the elections take place. I, therefore, appeal to this Parliament, this will be my last appeal, perhaps before the ensuing General Elections, on the subject. I appeal to Congressmen in particular, because many of them are honest people, liberal-minded people, and certainly I would not like the parliamentary elections to be conducted in this manner, or their party to be represented by the Americans or big business. I appeal to you from the Opposition. Let us sit together and discuss the matter in the larger interests of the country and come to certain understanding. Let us come to a certain understanding and let us have effective measures so that we can go to the elections and fight each other, not hitting below the belt, but fight in a free and fair way as far as possible. And the State apparatus, of course, will be used against the Opposition. Always it happens. But I appeal to the House to do something about it. I want Congressmen to beware of C.I.A. See the menace. I tell you today and some day I hope I may not have to repeat it. Here is time. Do something before it is too late. Take note of the developing situation, the grave advancing menace and the conspiracy that is afoot among the forces of reaction which combine to ruin our democracy and finish our country and bring about, if possible, a complete rightist take-over of our political life. Therefore, accept my Resolution. That is my final appeal to you.

Centre-State Relations*

Mr. Vice-Chairman, the purpose of this Resolution, I believe, is to introduce the subject for a lively and thoughtful discussion because the issue of Centre-State relations has today become a major one of great national importance. We must go into this question and revise the scheme of the Constitution not only for the sake of strengthening and expanding democracy, but also for safeguarding and promoting national integration and the unity of the nation. We have declared in our Constitution that India is a Union of States, but, in practice, we are treating the States as so many charity boys of the Centre. The Centre is concentrating more and more power in its hands. This is indeed a reflection, at the political level, of the concentration of wealth and power that is growing apace in the economic life of the country. I think this state of affairs must now yield to a better democratic, just and fair arrangement as between the States and the Centre, reflecting diffusion of power both at the political and economic level. Now, as the controversy has come to the forefront, the Jan Sangh and Swatantra Party have raised the slogan of a strong Centre and a unitary system. Unfortunately for the country, perhaps understandable in the present case, this slogan is being encouraged by some people in the Congress Party, leading lights of the Congress Party, especially the Congress President, Shri Nijalingappa.

It is surprising that after the reorganisation of the linguistic

*From the debate on Private Member's Resolution regarding Re-examination of Centre-State Relations, Rajya Sabha, 9 May, 1969, cc. 1987-1995.

States, Shri Nijalingappa should have come out against it at the Faridabad session of the Congress, which only exemplified the trend of thinking in high Congress quarters. Now, we are hearing, after the most unfortunate and untimely death of our esteemed former Chairman of this House and the President of India, Dr. Zakir Husain, the slogan of a strong President. I do not know what exactly they mean by a strong President, but again here is an attempt to concentrate power at the Centre and to put the President somewhat above Parliament. Indeed, the slogan is intended to weaken Parliament. That is what is intended. What we want here in this country is a strong and democratic Parliament, not a so-called strong President. We want a President who would be completely subservient to Parliament, subordinate to Parliament. He would have no discretionary powers whatsoever. That is the position today. Now, some of our friends are interested in creating an institution outside Parliament, so that Parliament is weakened and they can carry on their tricks and intrigues in order to subvert and undermine democracy. Surely we want a President who would be honest, democratic-minded, forthright, a man of integrity, who would rather resign from office than put his signature on all kinds of authoritarian and anti-democratic things. I would not like a President who would, in any circumstance, like to flout the advice given by the Council of Ministers. That would be going against the supremacy of Parliament on which I am not prepared to compromise even if it causes sometimes inconvenience because of the Congress Party being in power. Now, that is absolutely clear. So, the advocates of the unitary system of Government are really working for developing an authoritarian system in this country, where the States' autonomy instead of being strengthened, is liable to be undermined and weakened. In fact, the challenge has come from the champions of the so-called unitary system and of a strong President. Surprisingly enough they are no longer satisfied with a strong Home Minister. They would like to have a strong President also. Behind this is the evil intention to undermine the authority of Parliament in its own sphere. We have built up our polity, our system and way of thinking, on the

basis of unity in diversity and that position was accepted by the National Integration Council at its Srinagar meeting in June last year. The question is how we are going to implement and concretise this noble concept of unity in diversity in the States set-up, in the governmental set-up, in the context of Centre-State relations. If the States are weak, the Centre can never be strong. It can be an authoritarian Centre. It can be a despotic Centre. It can so snuggle all the time. But certainly it cannot be a strong and democratic Centre. Similarly if the Centre is weakened to the point of having no authority at all in order to safeguard the unity and solidarity of the country, that also will not be a welcome thing. Therefore, we want a Centre which will function on the basis of democratic principles and safeguard the unity and integrity of the nation as a whole; whereas at the same time we must have the States enjoying a wide range of powers, economic, political and otherwise, in order that out of this arrangement there develops a symphony of Centre-State relations to the common good of the people of the country. That is how we should approach the matter. There is no contradiction between having a democratic and viable Centre and having at the same time strong, democratic States. That is all we would like to have, but we do not have under the scheme of the Constitution this arrangement. We are supposed to have a federal Constitution but very little of federal principles are here, and whatever is there is sought to be violated and is, indeed, being violated by the Centre and the Congress Government; there are no safeguards in order to prevent such flouting of the federal principles. We are now therefore up against certain calculated onslaughts against the federal principles dictated by monopoly interests and those classes who believe in concentration of economic power and hence would like the political power and state power to be concentrated in the hands of a few. It is not without significance that investments of the monies accumulated in the hands of the rich are taking place in certain chosen places disregarding regional disparities and economic imbalances, and these investments are taking place purely from the point of view of earning more and more profits and securing greater concentration of wealth and economic power. These

gentlemen, having got control of the Central Government, would like the Central apparatus and administration to be run in such a manner that it subserves their economic interests. That is why you find in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution the revenue raising powers or powers in regard to raising of resources are concentrated beyond all proportion in the hands of the Centre, whereas the States have been given very little power in the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. We want this order to be changed.

Economically speaking, today the States owe to the Centre already Rs. 5000 odd crores. Am I to believe that the States in India would ever be in a position to repay this loan? This only shows how helpless the States are and how deliberately they had been rendered helpless. At the same time, when the powers for raising revenues in the States are extremely limited and their developmental and other activities at the grassroot level certainly are growing day by day, these developmental activities are being starved of the necessary resources which cannot be had unless Mr. Morarji Desai is convinced of the validity of their claim. Why should the States be left in such a position when one man at the Centre or the Government can veto developmental projects at the State level when we are committed to carry on developmental activities from the point of view of the masses and by associating the masses with them? So I should like even from that point of view that the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution insofar as it relates to the powers of taxation and revenue raising, whether in the Union List or in the State List, should be reconsidered and revised in favour of the State List and in favour of the States.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, if you look at the Lists of the Constitution, you will find that in the Seventh Schedule, in the State List, the powers that are given for raising revenue are practically nothing. The long list is there, but out of that you cannot get anything. We have got here emaciated cows when the milk cow like the Haryana cow is with the Centre. We want the Haryana cow to be shared between the Centre and the States... Haryana cow gives plenty of milk-in such a manner that the

States are in a position to raise revenue. That is number one. There are certain taxes which the Centre has power to impose on the States. Why, for example, some of these taxes should not be open for the State Governments to explore and utilise? Why the Union should have exclusive powers in regard to them? Take, for example, the wealth tax, wealth tax in West Bengal. The Central Government would not collect the money. Suppose the wealth tax was available to the States also in the sense that the States were empowered to impose the wealth tax, the United Front Government in West Bengal would have known how to raise huge quantities of fund by enforcing even the existing wealth tax measures which are going by default because the Central Government is interested in allowing avoidance and evasion of wealth tax. I can name the estate duty also and other duties which certainly should be given to the States. I need not take much time. What I would suggest in this connection is that the revenue-raising power should be reconsidered. It has been shown that it is not at all satisfactory and the fact is underlined by the development that States are all heavily indebted to the Centre, and there is no knowing when at all they would be in a position even to repay 25 per cent of their outstanding debt. That in itself is a reminder to the nation that something is wrong in the matter of distribution of the economic powers between the Centre and the States. The present arrangement is anti-democratic, is not conducive to the promotion of unity of the country and certainly comes in the way of national economic development if we at all intend to carry it out at the base with the co-operation of the masses. That is quite clear. For example, in Calcutta we have got many industries and enterprises which are practically all beyond the reach of the State Government from the point of view of raising revenue from them, and the Centre has the power. The Centre having been paid by the big monopolists of Birlas under the Congress would not care to raise the revenue which is easily accessible to them in those quarters. This is the position. So we need a drastic change in this matter...

As far as the political and administrative aspects are con-

cerned, I am not going into them. I hope this matter would be gone into seriously.

Administratively, we have now got a network of Union services operating in the States. Some of them are acting as agents of the Central Government to the detriment of the State Governments and we find that a kind of extra-territorial arrangement is being created, with the Centre encroaching upon the domain of the State under one pretext or other. And in this, some of the administrative services are being used. We should be clear in our minds exactly what are the all-India services, the services under the Centre and the services under the State. The States should not be inhibited in dealing with the services in the best interests of democracy and from the stand-point of a popular regime simply because some people at the Centre having certain rules or regulations which are obsolete, out-moded and unrelated to the facts of life today, would like to see that their henchmen and authority continue wherever they are. Therefore, that aspect is also very very important. All the spheres of administration you have now to discuss to see how much authority the States should be given.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, the very fact that the other day we passed a Bill giving certain autonomous powers or whatever you call it—sub-State and so on—to certain regions in Assam shows that the existing arrangement is not good and it has got to change. The question is, should we change it before the situation gets out of hand or should we change it before we are overwhelmed by a crisis? That is a matter for us to settle. I think you will agree that we should make the change well ahead, before any such untoward development takes place because we would not like the unity of the country, broadly speaking, to be disturbed.

So, I think the whole matter, as my friend has suggested, should be gone into. For example, why should the Home Minister come in, directly or indirectly, to advise the President as to who should be the High Court Judge? It should be left to the State. Let the President appoint anybody on the advice of the State Government. Why should the Home Minister come in?

We want the separation of the Judiciary from the Executive. But we are bringing in the Home Minister everywhere. I am not saying that you accept my suggestion. But certainly the States are to be absolutely viable in every sense and in authority. Only then can we strengthen the unity of the country.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, it would be a dangerous gamble with the destiny of this nation if some people try to impose, directly or indirectly, their authority on the fabric of our constitutional and political life. By this slogan of a unitary system, they are conspiring for counter-revolution and they want this country to be delivered to reaction absolutely to Right reaction. It is no wonder that the slogan of a unitary Government has come from these extreme rightist quarters and this slogan has to be met by the demand, and above all by the struggle, for more powers to the States—financial, economic, political and administrative powers—and for greater autonomy for the States. Two forces are today standing face to face—one force consisting of the extreme reactionaries of the Congress, the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra Parties all working for creating a kind of unitary system, to begin with, and, on the other hand, the leftist and progressive forces who are trying to strengthen the unity of the country and also to enrich democracy by a redistribution of power and authority as between the States and the Centre, in favour of the States. It is a vital issue today. I hope it will be settled in favour of the people and of the unity of the country, and keeping in view the demand of a dynamic democratic system that we want to build up...

Right of employment as a Fundamental Right

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am glad that we are discussing one of the most explosive problems of our time in this country after independence, namely, the problem of unemployment and under-employment. I am in agreement with the Resolution and I think nobody can take exception to it. I was a little surprised when I heard my friend, Shri Dharia, taking exception to the Expression in the Resolution, "that the Government of India has completely failed in solving the problem of unemployment". Evidently, Mr. Dharia does not like the word 'completely' but he would agree that the Government has failed. Now, I should like to know when this particular word could be properly used and where.

At the time of the First Five Year Plan there was a backlog of 3.3 million unemployed people in the country; at the start of the Second Five Year Plan the figure rose to 5.5 million; and, at the end of the Third Five Year Plan, it was 7.5 to 8 million and now it is in the neighbourhood of 20 million. After these, would Mr. Dharia object to this word 'completely' being introduced in this Resolution? If this is not a case of complete failure, I do not know where we can find an instance of complete failure. So, I think that my friend, Shri Dharia, because of his loyalty to the

* From the debate on the Resolution regarding amendment of the Constitution for inclusion of the right of employment in the fundamental rights, Rajya Sabha, 4 December, 1970, cc. 116-124.

ruling party and the Government, for once has gone wrong in this matter. Being an intelligent man that he is, he will certainly understand where the word 'completely' should be used and should not be used.

Now, unemployment is a problem which is not an easy one to be solved and, in fact, impossible to be solved on a permanent and durable basis, or, if I may say so, completely, under capitalism. Today, even in the affluent societies, the so-called affluent societies, of the USA, France, England, West Germany, etc., unemployment has risen.... But these are the very old capitalist societies and they are developed societies, affluent societies and there unemployment is on the rise today despite very great technological revolution having taken place. Sometimes, under capitalism this technological and scientific revolution leads to unemployment because the capitalist society does not know how to reconcile the problems of labour and employment on the one hand and the impact of the scientific and technological revolution on the other, which is taking place in the world today.

In under-developed countries also unemployment is rising, all the more so because backwardness is there and remains on account of the fact that the vested interests continue to wield their power in the economic and the political life of the country. And India is a case in point. We have got today so many people unemployed and we should not be guided by the figures of unemployment, but we must take into account what is called the disguised unemployment, that is to say, the figure of underemployed people. Now, if you take into account the rural and the urban economy, the rural and industrial economy, together, according to the various estimates that have been made officially, by 1980, there will be in this country, at this rate, one hundred million people unemployed or underemployed. This is the estimate made by the Government agencies, not by any other agency and such is the problem that we are facing. And not only that where the backlog goes on increasing, we find that the gap between the number of people

entering the labour market on the one hand, and the employment opportunities created, whether in the public sector or in the private sector, whether in agriculture or in industry, is widening again. Therefore, we are faced with the situation in this capitalist economy that as time passes, the backlog goes on increasing, and this gap between people seeking jobs and those who are supposed to offer jobs will go on increasing. Such is the situation today.

The remedy is, therefore, to be a basic one. There cannot be any tinkering with the problem. The present approach has proved utterly inadequate, and even laughable, in our society today. The Planning Commission has completely failed. It has criminally failed. I should not say 'completely'; I should say that the Government and the Planning Commission have not only completely failed in tackling the problem of unemployment, but have failed criminally, and deserve indictment at the bar of the nation. That is not the way we should approach the problem. We must look at the capitalist economy as a whole, instead of trying to find out piecemeal solutions here and there. It is possible to find out some makeshift arrangement in this or that sector of the economy. That is not going to solve the problem of this staggering dimension, namely, the problem of unemployment. We must go to the root cause of this problem and the growth of unemployment in our country.

In our agrarian economy, which accounts for nearly 70 per cent of our total population; and from where comes 45 per cent of the total national income, we are almost in a stage of semi-development, despite bickerings and talks about green revolution. The green revolution affects a very small area of land. But what is most important to consider in this context is whether you are developing the agrarian economy with a definite bias in favour of employment, with a view to eliminating unemployment and under-employment in the agrarian sector of the economy, with a view to harnessing the vast resources in the form of manpower and labour power and harnessing this production. That should be your approach. That has not been

done. Why? Because your methods are out-moded and anti-quoted. Certainly they are backward, whatever you may say. That is why it was not possible to do anything in regard to this matter.

Even today, on some computation it has been found that 21 crore acres of land could be easily found for distribution among the agricultural workers and among the poor peasants. *Harijans* and *Adivasis*, provided we re-organise our agriculture on a radical basis, carry out land reforms radically and remove manifold exemptions that stand in the way of even the implementation of the existing ceiling laws. If we bring under plough the fallow land, that has not been brought under plough, and also distribute the fallow land—it is easy to get 21 crore acres of land—among the peasantry, then you can well understand that we will have vast resources for tackling also unemployment and booming in the direction of solving this problem. After all, each village today in our economy, to solve the problem of unemployment, demands, before anything else, the distribution of land, to the tillers of the soil, to the agricultural labourers and poor peasants who remain for most of the year idle. And that means production in their hand. By this, we can really make a better break-through in our struggle against this menace of unemployment. But we are not doing it.....

What you are doing for your agriculture is the test of your sincerity and unless you hit the landlord concentration and undertake land distribution, let us not talk about the solution of the problem of unemployment because it leads you nowhere. I would like to point out the importance of setting up agro-industries in the rural areas. We should seriously launch a project of such agro-industries where we can create employment potential and create opportunities for supplementing the employment in the rural areas and semi-rural areas in our country. We should concentrate on also minor irrigation projects and building construction especially rural housing which would find employment for many people. The tendency to-day is to concentrate on very heavy irrigation and other projects and

medium irrigation projects. Of course these are necessary but in a country like ours where manpower is idle, where your resources are the human labour, these should be utilised to whatever possible extent in order on the one hand to reduce the cost of these projects and the foreign exchange element in it and on the other to provide employment.

I was in China twice and found that instead of going in for big irrigation projects, the whole of China had been studded with small irrigation projects with a view to solving problem of irrigation in such a manner that at the same time it gives employment to the poor peasants and the agricultural labour and those who come up in the labour market. We have no such approach here today. On the contrary we have an approach of starting big capital projects. That will neither solve the problem of food nor unemployment. The crux of the problem in our rural economy from the point of view of the production of food or from the point of view of employment is the distribution of land to the tillers of the soil and creation of employment opportunities by starting small irrigation projects, housing projects, agro-industries and so on. That will make for an integrated approach to our struggle for solving unemployment in the vast sector of our rural economy.

I now come to the question of industrial sector. The industrial sector is monopolistic and capitalistic. Unemployment is the progeny of a capitalist economy. The capitalists do want unemployment to maintain an army of unemployed so that they are in a better bargaining position with the labour and with the trade union movement. An army of unemployed people is a necessary capitalist thing for them with a view to browbeating the labour population and browbeating them in their trade union and other activities. Now therefore, as long as the basic motive in production is profitmaking the basic line of their activity would be how to carry on an intensive and extensive exploitation of labour. And that also brings unemployment and that is happening in our country. Therefore, you cannot run away with the hare and hunt with the hound. You cannot say we have a mixed economy with the capitalist class and the monopolist

class occupying a dominant position, a key position, and directing the economy openly and covertly on the one hand and at the same time you cannot claim that you are solving the problem of unemployment. The entire economy is vitiated by the influence of the monopolists, by sabotage and other activities of the monopolists. And here, for example we know very well how callous and cruel and cynical these monopolists are to the problem of unemployment. Even today you find that many capitalists in West Bengal have closed their factories, and they say it is due to labour trouble. May be some labour trouble is there but they are closing it all, and on the contrary the big monopolists are seeing to it that the smaller factories also do not run. Because there is competition between the big and the small, the big always sees to it and that is how the big continues to be big and the small is weeded out, is squeezed out from the field of production so that they continue to occupy the monopoly position. Therefore, as in the United States of America and in other advanced capitalist countries, the process is here, and because of the monopolists' operations the small-scale ones are going out of existence under the wheels of the fierce competition by the monopolist tycoons in the industry. That has to be stopped, and you cannot stop it by merely issuing sermons and other things. For this we need on the one hand very strong effective antimonopoly measures and above all expansion of the public sector. For this we need a very clearcut democratic employment-oriented labour policy which would make illegal closures punishable, retrenchment, lay off, etc. punishable so that the capitalist and the monopolist classes are not in a position to take to such action as creating more unemployed people.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, here is Mr. Bhagat sitting. We have Mr. Asoke Sen a member of the ruling party and a former Union Minister, who has closed down the Basumati concern throwing 550 people out in the streets. And can he deny—I would ask him—that the closure is illegal, that the closure of the 'Basumati' concern is illegal? No action is being taken. Mr. Asoke Sen belongs, to the ruling party who is going to take Mr.

Dharia's professions seriously, because Mr. Asoke Sen is a friend and a member of the ruling party and has been a former Union Minister and still owes allegiance to the Government of the day? And today he is creating unemployment right under our nose in the streets of Calcutta by illegally closing the 'Basumati' concern.

Therefore, what is needed today? This concept of mixed economy is a bogus concept. It is a colossal bluff. You cannot be chaste and a streetwalker at the same time. You cannot be both. You cannot be a street-walker and a virtuous lady at the same time. It is impossible. Today the concept of mixed economy is a mischievous concept, and I find that Mr. Dinesh Singh, our Industries Minister, is trying to popularise the theory of mixed economy in a manner where the mixture is more and more in favour of the employer, of the monopolist, and the worker is left without anything. Therefore, let us not talk about it. Today there must be a structural change in our economy where the foreign concerns, like oil, should be nationalised and other monopoly concerns should be nationalised for the public sector to gain a preponderance in our economy, and certainly in our industrial economy. But this is not being done. The second point I should like to say is that you must give encouragement to small scale industries and medium scale industries. Do not think that we can tackle the problem of unemployment by starting big industries only. We are limited in our resources but surely small scale industries and medium scale industries you can start. The country can be studded with such industries especially in the backward regions. Industrially speaking, the country can be studded with such industries with the backing of the State Governments and the Central Government and the credit institutions of the Government of India and that is how we can create employment opportunities and spread out employment all over the country but that is not being done. In this context not only there is need for expansion of the public sector; the public sector must enter the consumer industries, must start such small industries and thus create employment

potential. We should do that not only for selling goods at cheap prices to the consumer but also for attracting labour and finding employment opportunities. At the same time small men in industry should be given assistance. Our small scale industry people as you know, do not get assistance in credit, do not get assistance in raw material, do not get assistance when they require a little foreign exchange, do not get assistance for marketing facilities and so on and even after the nationalisation of the banks the position has not changed. Therefore the Government should really link up the development and expansion of the small and medium scale industries with the creation of employment opportunities. That should be made a condition for all industries.

Finally, closure, retrenchment, lay-off, all these things should be dealt with very firmly by the Government and the capitalist class should not be allowed, the monopolists should not be allowed to hold our economy to ransom in this manner creating such a social problem.

Sir, before I sit down, I would say I have made some suggestions, concrete suggestions but I know they will not accept them. All that happens is, I have spoken, you have rung the bell and you have listened to it but nothing will come out of it. This Government is utterly incompetent, it has no labour policy at all. Its planning is not only defective but it is no planning at all. To call it Planning Commission and Udyog Bhavan is a colossal misuse of expression.

US Military Assistance to Pakistan★

Madam, Vice-Chairman, on Saturday last; while presenting his credentials to the President of India at Rashtrapati Bhawan, Mr. William Saxbe, the new U.S. Ambassador to our country, said:

"Our two nations have in the recent years moved with dignity and frankness to resolve a series of problems and to establish our relations on a new basis of maturity equality and mutual respect. We look forward to building and elaborating our practical relations in the fields of science and technology, economics, commerce, education and culture. It will be my duty and pleasure to help contribute to the consolidation of the process."

Then he went on to say:

"We should and must work together towards common goals and common achievements of our problems which confront us all. Foremost among them is peace, peace with neighbours and peace in the world at large."

Evidently, William Saxbe forgot the decision by his Government to resume arms supply to Pakistan which has had a very serious negative impact on whatever possibility was there for improving relations between the United States and our country. We feel, Madam, the Indo-U.S. relations can never be built on any solid foundations at all unless America gives up its policy of hostility, provocation and armed preparations against our

* From the discussion under Rule 176 in Rajya Sabha, 10 March 1975, cc. 129 — 147.

country to threaten our independence and security, to pressurise and blackmail us. Evidently, William Saxbe also forgot the dividing line between sheer humbug and effrontery on the one hand and diplomacy on the other. We have been through such kind of facile, dishonest utterances by Kissinger, and others, specially by Kissinger when he was here in this country in October last year. These are fresh in our minds. Even Shri Chavan, after his talk with Kissinger, seems to have been slightly taken aback at his dishonesty. I do not mean to blame Shri Chavan but we have to learn from life. Shri Chavan, in his statement in the Indo-U.S. Joint Commission said.

"Mr. Secretary, in signing this agreement today we have registered substantial progress in giving a purposeful direction to our relations. Let me express the hope that in the coming months and years, these relations will be further strengthened, secure in the belief that we share the common objective of promoting peace, stability, co-operation, bilaterally, regionally and globally."

Shri Chavan's fond hopes have been dashed to the ground and believed by a dishonest diplomat of gun-boat diplomacy, namely, Henry Kissinger. Now, therefore, I would like to tell Mr. Saxbe since he is in our country that he should be left in no doubt that we may be a nation poor in materials, but we are a nation great in heritage, great in intellect and great in comprehension of the world and above all, in compassion for mankind and cause of peace and stability. Now, it is not for me to advise. Mr. Saxbe himself was not very happy when the decision was made to resume arms supply to Pakistan.

But then, the decision, Madam Vice-Chairman, has not come as a surprise to us. In fact, now only the gun-running will begin and start openly and without any pretence or secrecy whatsoever. American arms have been always flowing to Pakistan during the decade since the so-called embargo was imposed at the time of the Indo-Pak war in 1965. These arms were flowing to Pakistan through third countries, like Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and others and every body knows that the flow

of American arms from these countries could not have taken place without the direction of the United States of America. Any how, American arms were reaching Pakistan despite the so-called arms embargo, through America's NATO allies and CENTO partners and others.

As far as this embargo is concerned, the ban was partially lifted in 1973 (January—March) and in the name of supplying spares, what they call non-lethal weapons, these included armoured cars and many other things, some of which are and have been in the past used in suppressing the people of Baluchistan, North East Frontier and other places.

Apart from this, China was supplying arms to Pakistan. Since China's policy is not to sell arms, we take it that China was gifting arms to Pakistan and this amounts to 312 million dollars, according to the estimates.

These arms are modern weapons including fighters and so on. Apart from that, France was also supplying arms worth 214 million dollars and these include, again, Mirage planes and many other sophisticated weapons. Pakistan was already getting arms over the years, since the ban by the USA through third countries, from China which is in collusion in this matter with the USA; and from France which is supplying arms and making roaring business out of it. So much so that last year Prime Minister Bhutto publicly boasted that Pakistan was really better equipped than India at the time of the Indo-Pak War of 1971, that the losses had been made up. Therefore, it is not a question of bringing Pakistan, by supplying new arms, to the level of 1971; that level had not only been reached but exceeded, thanks to gun-running by the United States and certain other countries, including the People's Republic of China.

As you know very well, under the US-Pak Military Pact, Pakistan had been gifted arms worth 2.5 billion dollars. Well, that comes to nearly 2000 crores in our currency. Only the

other day a report said that Iran has decided to supply at least 50 F-5 aircraft to Pakistan to replace the outdated Sabre F-80s. And there is also a decision on the part of Iran to help military build-up otherwise in Pakistan also by starting joint factories and so on. In fact, Iran is utilising its resources in a big way to rearm Pakistan and to build up an arms race in Pakistan. This new move on the part of the United States is really intended to involve Pakistan in an arms race, arms race by proxy on behalf of the United States. It is quite clear that the United States today wants to build a new balance of military power in our region, and, therefore they are interested in using Pakistan as a military base. So, it should not be taken as if only Pakistan is interested in building up the arms race and America is not or that America is just a seller of arms. That is not so. In fact, Mr. Bhutto, unfortunately for us and for the people of Pakistan, has again fallen into the trap of the United States in which he is offering his country, his resources and his man-power to the United States imperialists so that they could be used against us—well, against the countries of this region. What is essential therefore today is to make a correct assessment of the resumption of US arms aid to Pakistan including the timing of it, and the assessment must be political, military and also economic. All the implications should be carefully studied.

Therefore, we require a comprehensive policy in order to understand the situation so that we can correctly formulate our actions.... I quote here from a statement of Mr. T.N. Kaul in January last; he said:

“Relations between any two sovereign, independent countries and nations, particularly between the two of the biggest countries in the world like India and United States, cannot be and should not be assessed in the context of the present or of the recent past, but in the larger perspective of history and the future prospect.”

Last year in Bombay, in October, 1974, Shri T.N. Kaul said that he was confident that the Kissinger's visit would lead to

better understanding between the two countries. Mr. Kissinger at that time was speaking of mature relationship between our two countries. Sardar Swaran Singh, when he was in charge of the Ministry of External Affairs, visited the United States of America in 1974 September and he made a statement after his talks with President Ford. He said:

"I was satisfied with my talks because his approach to the problems was both positive and helpful."

We criticised that statement of Sardar Swaran Singh in this House and if you do not mind, may I say that we stand vindicated and the knowledgeable Foreign Minister stands rejected by the facts of life. That does not mean that we are claiming that everything in the Foreign Ministry is wrong. That is not the point.

The regret is that our Foreign Ministers sometimes become so gullible that the moment they go to White House and have a look at the President they think they are in front of a divine preacher. the moment they think they are receiving benedictions from him they start saying all kinds of things which make no sense whatsoever, which weaken the vigilance of the country and somewhat brings discredit to the integrity and stature of our people. That should not be done.

Madam, during the same visit Mr. Kissinger said:

"Our relations with India have already improved systematically since the Pakistani war."

And you will remember that during 1973 and 1974 Shri T.N. Kaul was making statements almost every day praising the United States of America. And Mr. Kissinger was reported as the "very dear, beloved friend". You will recall that it was even said that the "tilt" towards Pakistan had gone. We do not know what it meant. If we were to use that word, may I say that Mr. Chavan does not know that not only the tilt has not gone, if there was a tilt at all, a hug and embrace have now begun

with ship-loads of arms offered to Pakistan all directed against our country amongst others. So we should be very careful. I think in assessing the situation we should also assess it in the larger context of the global strategy of the United States of America particularly in relation to the strategy in South Asia and against the Third World Countries. We are a proud nation of the Third World. From that angle let us review this situation. In Vietnam the Americans have mounted their aggressive actions and are in direct military involvement allowing their bombers to carry on sorties against the liberated Republic of South Vietnam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of Vietnam. They are violating every day the Paris Agreement of 1973. They are violating every other commitment to which they are signatories. They have started "Great Action" in Cambodia and it is reported that troops may be landed there. The Taiwan troops may be moving in that direction. In November, they carried out what they call military exercises in the Indian Ocean which is now being sought to be militarised by them. They have not only started a base in Diego Garcia, they have built up a series of bases all over and they are prowling around the Persian Gulf area in order to threaten our country.

Now, as you know very well, these are mostly directed against the third world countries, specially countries like India and anti-imperialist countries of the Arab World. The threat to the Arab countries is very open and significant. Here, this is what, in his address to the World Energy Conference at Detroit held on September 23, 1974, President Ford declared:

"Sovereign nations cannot allow their policies to be dictated or their fate decided by artificial rigging of oil prices and disruption of the world community market."

He went on to say:

"Throughout the world's history, nations have gone to war over natural advantages such as water or food or convenient passage on land or sea."

If this is not an open threat of war against the oil-producing Arab countries, what is? What is surprising is, in the changed inter-national situation today, Gerald Ford has the gumption and temerity to issue such a blatant threat of armed intervention against the newly free Arab countries who have every right to use their resources as they like. Now, are we to think that this threat has no relation to what they are doing either in Pakistan or in Diego Garcia or in other places? They are part of the global strategy. Now, India's friends are attacked and threatened in this blatant and criminal manner by no less a person than the President of the United States of America. I mention this thing because it is very very important. Now, in this connection, I should also like to point out certain other things. They want to divide, naturally, the Arab world, apart from threatening. This is part of their tactics. Iran has been supplied arms and continues to receive arms. According to the Time Magazine of the United States of America and other sources, Iran has bought arms worth 7.6 billion, or 7,600 million dollar. And still the supplies are continuing. Apart from that, arms have gone also to Israel. Israel has placed an order for arms worth 2,000 million dollars for 1974-75, and much of this military hardware is coming from the United States of America. Particularly aggressive is their strategy against the third world countries and India, may I say and point out to you very seriously, is their main target. Why?

India is their main target because we are not only a great nation with high traditions of anti-imperialism, but we occupy a very strategic position, and thanks to our foreign policy, in many ways we have played an important role in shaping the course of world development along with the socialist countries and other peace forces. And we are fighting in our countries and elsewhere against colonialism and neo-colonialism, neo-colonialism in particular. Naturally in the United Nations or in the Non-aligned Summit, as in Algiers, our country took a very forceful stand in defence of the sovereign rights of the newly free countries. Naturally, we have become an eyesore to the

United States of America. The US imperialism knows very well that unless India is browbeaten, curbed, menaced and threatened, it would not be possible for them to have their domineering say in this region, South Asia. They know it very well. Therefore, they made us a special target and that is why they are supplying once again arms to Pakistan, in addition to the military build-up that is in the progress in the Indian Ocean zone and around this region. That is how we should assess the situation. There should not be any temporising on this understanding on the part of the Government. South Block should realise this simple fact of life, understand it and interpret it in such a manner that proper action follows.

U.S. arms are intended against India and also Afghanistan. None of us threatened Pakistan. We have offered them Simla Agreement. We have even offered them a no-war pact. We seek no war with Pakistan. We are pursuing peaceful policies and are interested in the peaceful implementation of the Simla Agreement. The same can be said about Afghanistan which wants peace and normal relations with Pakistan. But all the time Pakistan rulers are giving provocation to this friendly and peace-loving country.

Simla Agreement has been clearly outraged by this decision of the United States to resume arms supply. The first article of the Simla Agreement has been violated. I should only like to remind hon. Members of what is said in this Agreement. The commitment of this Agreement is very simple. The commitment is that the two countries shall maintain bilateral relations in order to strengthen the cause of peace. The first article of this Agreement says:

The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan are resolved that the two countries put an end to conflict and confrontation and work for promotion of friendly and harmonious relationship and establishment of durable

peace in the sub-continent, so that both the countries may henceforward devote their resources and energy to the present task of advancing the welfare of the people.

This is the Agreement. The Americans have brought Pakistan to such a situation when this international agreement to which Kissinger pays lip-sympathy is blatantly and shamelessly violated. Simla spirit is to be destroyed. This is their aim. Their move is against that spirit of peace and amity. We shall not deviate from the path of Simla Agreement in which we believe. Therefore, we will not depart from the path of peace and accord and if necessary all peace-loving countries in this region should work together in order to meet the challenge and threat posed by Americans.

Politically this is a pure and simple pressure on our country. It is intended to encourage reactionary and pro-imperialist forces in our country and to this I shall come a little later. American diplomacy is not separate from its military action or *vice versa*.

Economically, if I may point out to the Government, it is a move to force India to divert our resources for defence spending. We are already spending about Rs. 2,500 crores per year. America wants us to spend even more so that we are not in a position to find resources for other development activities in the economic sphere. They want to create thereby difficulties for our country and aggravate the crisis. That aspect should also be kept in view.

Militarily, they want to change the balance of power by this shameful arms supply to Pakistan they want to inject artificially into our region a division. They are doing this through Pakistan and we are told that they are even offering to America naval base. This is a very strange and serious situation.

Now let me come to what it means politically. Politically it means de-stabilisation. You cannot separate this move from the American political strategy of de-stabilisation of this country and the newly freed countries. Mere at the Press Conference on September 16, 1974, President Gerald Ford was asked: Under what international law, do you have the right to attempt de-stabilisation of a constitutionally elected Government of another country? Does the Soviet Union has a similar right in respect of Canada or the United States? The President's reply was: I am not going to pass judgment on whether it is permitted or authorised under the international law. But it is a recognised fact that historically as well as presently such actions are taken in the best interests of the countries involved.

Therefore, the theory of de-stabilisation is there. They have declared at this Press conference their right to carry on destabilisation of the kind that I have mentioned. Mr. William Colby has said it even more frankly. Mr. Colby, the CIA Director, has said it and what he said is very interesting. This is what he said:

"There are a few situations in which a limited discreet help to a few friends of the USA or a few people espousing a certain policy or programme in a foreign country can enable us to influence local situations in a way that might avert a grave crisis in the future."

I do not know whom Mr. Colby has in mind. But it does appear that he has Indians within his range of operation. Do I understand that he is helping some—well, it seems so—friends here, giving a little help? What help that is and in what form that is coming here are for our friends to tell us. But it has come. It does appear that the so-called movement, the movement that we are seeing in this country in which the American friends and the pro-American elements have joined, may include friends of Mr. Colby and this is to be found out by Shri Chavan. Therefore, when we talk about the arms aid to

Pakistan, we must also look into the other aspect of it, namely the political aspect of the issue wherein we find that the destabilisation doctrine is already in operation in our country. Is it not a fact that Mr. Moynihan sent a telegram to the Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger, last year expressing his horror or rather his perturbation about the manner in which the CIA was functioning here? Only today we have got a report that Mr. Drobot of the Westinghouse, who was arrested here, has jumped the bail and fled the country and he is now in the USA. We were expressing our apprehension that the Director of the Westinghouse, who had been arrested for many economic and other offences, would escape the arms of law and he has escaped the arms of law now and we know it for a fact that the Ministry of External Affairs was impressing upon the Ministry of Finance that Mr. Drobot should not be arrested because that would lead to many complications and all that. Now, our warning has come true and he has escaped the arms of law. Mr. Chavan should tell us about it and Mr. Subramaniam should tell us about the deal that has taken place.

Now, I say that we are in the midst of destabilisation and, therefore, we cannot just separate what is happening internally within our country from what is happening externally. As we have said, it is a two-pronged attack on our country, from outside to threaten and menace us, to pressurise and blackmail us, and from inside to create conditions of political subversion so that the rightist take-over can take place when the USA will have a Government of its heart and, well, when Mr. Colby, Dr. Kissinger and President Ford will all be happy to influence the Government as they like. Therefore, it is all the more serious today.

Now, coming to the other things, we are a little humoured when Shri. Jayaprakash Narayan condemns the American action of resumption of the arms supply to Pakistan. We are happy whenever anybody condemns it. But you cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hound if you condemn the American

action, you have also to draw certain political conclusions from it. You have to stop the movement in the country which is encouraging the pro-American and reactionary elements and the potentialities of these forces for subversion and you have also to stop the anti-Soviet propaganda because we know that the Indo-Soviet Treaty is against the American aggressive design. Was it not proved at the time of the Bangladesh liberation? Was it not proved at the time of the visit of the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Grechko, when both the countries issued a joint communique? What do you find in the joint communique? It is said in the joint communique:

“Both sides highly appraised the steadfast friendship and the growing co-operation between the two countries and noted that the Indo-Soviet friendship was an important factor not only for strengthening peace and stability in Asia, but also throughout the world.”

Do you deny it? Then, again:

“Both sides attach special importance to the question of preserving and strengthening peace and stability in Asia by the joint efforts of all the States in this region...”

Then:

“The Soviet side positively assessed the progressive and anti-imperialist direction of the non-alignment movement, of which India was one of the leaders, and expressed support for the aspirations of the non-aligned countries to promote the consolidation of world peace, security and cooperation...”.

Are these not words that conform to our national interest in maintaining world peace, as also in strengthening our independence and security in the face of such vicious and cowardly attack that has been mounted at the moment by the USA by resumption of arms supply to Pakistan?

I am coming to the conclusion. Take the case of Pakistan. What is happening there is very, very important. I am not quarrelling with Pakistan. We are sorry for Pakistan, because they too suffer. Since the new deal was announced, almost simultaneously a brutal repression was launched in north-eastern province and other parts. The National Awami Party, which is the major opposition party, was suppressed. Its leader, Mr. Wali Khan, was arrested and persecution is going on. You will remember that such things happen. In 1954 when the US military pact was signed, simultaneously in East Bengal the Legislative Assembly was dissolved and way was paved for the advent of Ayub dictatorship, leading ultimately to reaction. These facts are well-known. Not only that Reactionaries are strengthened by the US move of resumption of arms and reactionary, anti-Indian elements are being strengthened. The bellicose language of Mr. Bhutto or, for that matter, his call for 'hartal' in Kashmir, should not be taken apart from an instrument of American interference through Pakistan. That is how we should view it. Arms are given and encouragement is given. You remember that Pakistan spends nearly 10 per cent of its gross national income on military. Nearly Rs. 500 crores have been budgeted in the last year. And still the United States is supplying arms. It is not merely arms supply. They are making it possible for America to spend so much money on their military budget. The Americans are helping Pakistan in order to build up the military machine and encourage and strengthen the reactionary, anti-Indian, aggressive forces who do not want peace in our subcontinent at all. Therefore, we should view it in this light.

This is also against international detente. The American Action is an affront to peace forces, to the cause of peace. It runs counter to international detente. Unless the detente spreads to our area, it cannot be real and consolidated, much less could it be irrevocable. The Americans are already spending the highest ever on their military budget. If you leave the war year, it is running at the rate of 86,000 million dollars a

year. They are building up an arms race. You can well imagine that they are spending several times the total income of the developing countries. They are maintaining 300 major and 3000 minor bases all over the world, specially in our part of the world. Therefore, I say that this action is a challenge to international peace, to peace forces and liberation forces. It is an affront to the United Nations Charter. And that is why it should be taken very seriously not only by the people in our region, but by all the peace forces all over the world.

Then, I have to make two or three suggestions as to what steps the Government should take.

First of all, I must welcome, I must congratulate, Shri Chavan, our new Minister of External Affairs or the very wise and prompt action he took in cancelling his visit to Washington to attend the meeting of the Indo-US Joint Commission. It deserves a word of good cheer from Parliament. It was a prompt and wise decision, which has added to our prestige. But I do maintain at the same time that the Indo-US Joint Commission has forfeited its right to exist because of the actions of the USA. I have got with me the Joint Commission Agreement. The very purpose of the Joint Commission was to promote relations between our two countries—to normalise relations.

You cannot give arms to Pakistan, build up military bases and threaten us at gun point on the one hand and make a pretence of economic and cultural co-operation on the other hand. This is dishonesty of the worst type. It must be scrapped. Economic measures should also be taken. As I have pointed out, this has economic implications. They want to create economic difficulties for us. Therefore, I ask the Ministry of Finance and other Ministries not to have that kind of euphoria about American aid and so on. The American multi-national corporations should not be allowed to come to our country. On the contrary, some of the existing ones should be nationalised. We should stop immediately repatriation of remittances of

profits, dividends and royalty from this country to the United States of America. We should stop all subversive activities by the C.I.A. There are experts and research scholars in this country, many of whom, according to the latest book, are nothing but C.I.A. agents. They are subverters. They are in collusion with reaction in our country. They are the supporters of total revolution. They are for total destruction of our democracy. It is very very necessary that action is taken against them. Indian Ocean should be made a peace zone. Decisions have already been taken and I will ask the Government to take initiative in this direction early. The programme of the Fourth Non-aligned Summit should be implemented and the Government, as a powerful non-aligned country, should take initiative in seeking co-operation and implementation of the programmes. The U.N. General Assembly, at its Sixth Special Session, passed a general resolution on the rights and duties of the State. I think this gives us an opportunity to mobilise the non-aligned nations against colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialist aggression. A long-term and short-term policy planning should be made by your Ministry. I understand you are having a policy planning apparatus. I think you should first cleanse the stable there in the South Block and then formulate a vigorous short-term and long-term policy.

Madam, Vice-Chairman, In this connection, I would say that it is of urgent importance today that all the anti-imperialist forces, irrespective of where they are situated, should be mobilised in a common action. The third world is an anti-imperialist force. This should be our duty, as a prominent non-aligned nation, that we take initiative in bringing about a unanimous action against imperialism and neo-colonialism. In this connection, I would say that the Government of India should explore the possibility for the establishment of a system of Asian Collective Security.

We think that the establishment of Asian Collective Security would be in consonance with the spirit of the Bandung Conference and the Panchsheel which was signed earlier. China may violate but we stand by the principles of Panchsheel. We stand by the Bandung Declaration.

Therefore, I would only suggest to Shri Chavan that the time has come now, in view of this kind of aggressive actions, that you should take the initiative in exploring the possibility with all freedom loving nations for establishing a system of Asian Collective Security. In the changed world situation today, when our stature is also very high, it is necessary to take the struggle forward. I think, you will agree Mr. Chavan that the non-aligned nations in Asia, the newly independent nations could come closer, carrying forward the tradition of that Conference. Therefore, I suggest that you take the initiative for exploring the possibilities for the establishment of a system of Asian Collective Security which, in our view, would be very powerful answer to the American aggressive action and will play a great part in uniting all anti-imperialist forces and also in bringing about co-operation amongst them for goodwill, for defence, for independence and security not only of their own country but of the entire region thereby making an invaluable contribution to the cause of world peace and international security.

Status of Women in India*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, it is good that we are discussing again the question of women's emancipation, their roles and rights in society, which is in our view a very important subject. It is aptly said that the quality and character of a society or for that matter of a civilization is judged by the status of women in it. And today, when we look at our society, we find that we are lagging far behind even by the standards of the bourgeoisie society, and vast sections of the humanity are living in poverty, in squalor and hunger, in destitution and degradation in many ways, in a society where there are affluent people going about and parading their wealth and privilege. And in this context, our women who constitute a very weak section of our entire population, to which I shall come later, live in denials and hardships, neglected in many ways by those who are at the helm of the society, and yet fulfilling very important functions for the advancement of our country and for the well-being of our people. Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I cannot think of our civilization if I do not take into account the priceless contribution which the women have made over the ages and these are part of our literature, part of our history, part of our culture and indeed part of our heritage. Sir, we shall be discussing today this problem against the background of the international observance of 1975 as the Women's International Year. We are called

* From the discussion on Motion regarding Report of Committee on Status of Women in India, Rajya Sabha, 13 May, 1975, cc. 185—199.

upon to face the problem and we are called upon to lay down a programme of action, not for parading to the world and declaring something but for implementation in actual life.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, let me come, in this connection, to the steps that have already been taken... All the distinguished ladies, must be, of course, belonging to the educated, elite class, nevertheless, have produced a Report which shows some understanding and sympathy to the cause of women and pinpointed some of the evils and ills from which we all suffer. In this connection, I cannot but pay my tribute to the National Federation of Indian Women and the All India Women's Conference and other organizations which have individually and collectively taken up the cause of women and have started the campaign all over the country. But I hope the Government will respond to their efforts with understanding and sympathy, and in a generous manner so that the programmes that have been put forward by these organizations collectively on behalf of the campaigning committee do not remain on paper but become facts of life, taking their blessings to our women seeking emancipation from social and economic bondage. Sir, the responsibility of the Government in this regard is indeed very great.

Progress relating to the status of women has been made despite the failures of the Government in many spheres, despite the capitalism that rules our society, despite the existence of feudal elements and feudalism in our countryside causing havoc to the life of the people, especially to the life of our womenfolk there. Therefore, the Government must undertake to fulfil this responsibility and in order to undertake this responsibility it must critically understand the failures and the reasons for those failures. If you look at our society, you will find India's vast womanhood living in a state of poverty and backwardness from which millions and millions of our mothers

and sisters suffer year after year. We have in our country a total population of 548 million, among whom 264 million are women, according to the last census of 1971. How many countries in the world have got a population of 264 million? None, except China. Therefore, here is a vast segment of humanity. It is not only a problem of women of India. A vast segment of humanity lives in conditions of backwardness, dependence and unless they are lifted to the level of modern civilisation, emancipated from the fetters of the whole society with social progress and advancement, there cannot be advancement of our country and nor can there be advancement in the world at large. Emancipation of women is not a sectarian problem of emancipation of a section of the people. It is essentially a problem of emancipation of womankind from degradation, from bondage, from suffering, from injustices and hardships that destroy the very foundation ultimately of our social life.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I have given you an idea of the population and, in that context, the population of women. 210 million of our women live in villages. If you take the women population 215.3 million women out of 264 million are illiterate even after 25 years of Independence. The total percentage of their literacy is barely 18.7 per cent after 27 years of Independence. In absolute numbers there are more illiterate women today than there were at the time of our Independence or in the early years of our Independence. Illiteracy is a curse and women suffer most from it. Our Government has not taken enough care to make them literate, to remove ignorance and illiteracy because it seems that some people have developed vested interests in keeping women in ignorance and in condition of illiteracy because they believe in exploitation and plunder and thrive on the injustices which they bestow on the society.

Now, here, there are many other factors. I would like to point out in this connection that we have got a working population of 180.4 million out of which barely 31.3 million are women as against 149.1 million men. That again shows a sad and tragic state of affairs. In the first instance, our working population is

relatively very small compared to the total population and in the total working population you find the place of women is very very negligible, barely 31 million. How can you expect the society to advance when so many millions of our women are unemployed, have not been brought into productive labour in our country whether in industries or in agriculture? They have been taken out from the channels of productive labour, whether you call it agriculture or industry or any other sphere of production. Are only they suffering? The whole society is suffering.

We have seen in the socialist world what wonders women can do. They go into space, they can fly to the moon, they can do so many other things. Engineers, doctors, technicians are coming from them and their performance is very high. Yet, we are stuck up in the old civilisation. Women, most of whom are again employed in agriculture doing the day's labour, are denied what is their due. They are persecuted, oppressed in many ways. Equal pay for equal work is a slogan which has never been implemented in so far as women are concerned. Yet we inscribed in our constitution that there must be equal pay for equal work and we still declare that we are a party to the ILO Convention No. 100. We have not implemented it. Now, I have given these examples only to point out how women suffer in our society in actual life or are kept away from the sphere of production.

Now, Mr. Deputy Chairman, let me point out one or two other things in this connection because these are very very important. As far as we are concerned. I must make it clear to you, I do not think complete social and economic emancipation of women is possible without ending capitalism, without the establishment of socialism, without having the working class at the helm of our national affairs and without even having the working class as the ruling class of our country. So long as capitalism remains, there will not be complete social and economic emancipation and I for one have no illusion on this score.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, many years ago it was said by Marx

and Engels—I am quoting—“The emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible so long as women are excluded from socially productive work and restricted to house work, which is private.” Gandhiji voiced this sentiment when he put forth and championed the cause of women but, many years before, a century and a quarter ago, the Communist Manifesto written by Marx and Engels, the founding fathers of Marxism, the noblest ideology of all times, says:

“The bourgeois has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.”

Again they wrote in the same Manifesto:

“The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production.”

The bourgeoisie sought mortality at the time of the mid last century. The bourgeoisie were accusing communists of—what they called—“communising woman.” That has been their customary saying in the old days. Now they do not say this. Marx and Engels gave another answer which I hope some Hon. Members at least will appreciate.

“Our bourgeoisie, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletariat at their disposal, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives.”

Not that every capitalist is a seducer. Temperamentally he will be a seducer; factually it will not be possible for him. But the fact remains, that was the attitude of the bourgeois capitalist class towards women. Then, in the same Manifesto Marx pointed out:

“The real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.”

That is what he said. The Communist Manifesto laid down certain ideas for social emancipation for which the communists have fought all along and today these ideas have triumphed in one-third of the world where more than a third of humanity live with their women taking equal position alongside men. I have

said this thing in order to explain what lies at the root of the problem. Therefore, is it not possible for us to take certain measures for the improvement of the conditions of women, for the advancement of their social and cultural life, for reducing their dependence in the economic sphere and their dependence on the man, if I may say so, in many respects?

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, you must have noted, you are no doubt aware that our Constitution has a series of provisions in many articles. I would like to remind the House about some of the articles in the Constitution. Article 14 of our Constitution ensures equality before law. Are our women equal before law? The dowry provisions exist but are these enforced? Is there any protection by law against the vultures who flourish on dowry? Dowry is demanded and accepted with impunity in our society and those who are responsible for enforcement of law, themselves become dowry-takers and dowry-givers in one form or other. If that is so, how do we except the anti-dowry law to come into force? Its fate has been that of the Untouchability Act and the Report of the Committee on the Status of women has very rightly pointed out—and I congratulate the authors of the Report for that—that this Dowry Prohibition Act has singularly failed. If the Dowry Prohibition Act has singularly failed, who is responsible for it? If the law passed by Parliament is not enforced by the Government and is not enforced in practice of life, somebody must be responsible for it. I would like to ask Shrimati Indira Gandhi, her Government, State Governments, Mr. Nurul Hasan and other colleagues on the Treasury Benches as to why an Act passed by Parliament for giving protection to the women against the acceptance of dowry has not been implemented, why it has been allowed to be a dead letter. There is no explanation for it. I will ask you to go into this question.

* * * * *

I say that acceptance of dowry should be made a cognizable offence. If you think that it is a crime, we should amend the law in such a manner that the people who practise, accept or demand dowry are penalised, given exemplary punishment.

Dowry-taking is a crime, socially reprehensible element than many other crimes which are committed in our economic life because the victims of this crime are women, the most oppressed sections of our community. If society does not take care of them, look after them, who will protect them? If the matter is allowed to remain as a dead letter and the Government does not discharge its elementary responsibility, it is the society that has to give them protection.

Then, there is article 15 which says: The State shall not discriminate against any citizen.... Then there is Article 15(3) which empowers the State to make any special provisions for women and children. Has Article 15(3) been implemented in the spirit in which it has been inscribed in our Constitution? The answer is 'No'.

Article 16 guarantees equal opportunity for all citizens in the matter relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State. Has it been done? It has not been done. Look at the private sector. There employment in women is much less relative to the public sector, and even in public sector it is very low. There is an attempt to weed out, throw out women. The more we pass social legislation giving rights and privileges to women, the greater is the tendency on the part of the Tatas and Birlas, the tycoons, the capitalists to throw women out of employment. It is happening in most of the private sector undertakings.

Then there is Article 16(2) prohibiting discrimination on grounds of sex. Has it been implemented? No. Why has it not been implemented? If it has not been implemented, the Constitution is being violated, fundamental law of the land is being violated. What is the Government doing to put a stop to it? They are cynically violating the fundamental law of the country which relates to the status of women. You have to explain all these things. It is not as if you give your opinion. You should categorically admit before us and the country your own failures, your own cynicism, your own neglect, your own callousness in the matter of implementation of the solemn declarations which go in favour of women community in our

society. Now, I need not go into these very many things. Even if I take into account 31 million women workers who are in India today, 28 million are in the rural areas, and among them 87 per cent again are engaged in agriculture and in conditions you know very well. They are a kind of wage slaves. They are exploited by men, exploited by landlords, neglected and left ignorant. They do not even know the laws relating to them. They are deliberately kept in ignorance. Only 3 million women are employed in urban areas. There again, in the manufacturing industry, barring the household industry, 13 per cent of those who are employed in urban sector belong to the manufacturing industry. In the rural areas, 13 per cent of women are in the working force; in the urban areas, less than 7 per cent. But, what is disturbing, Mr. Deputy Chairman, is that this percentage is declining, the proportion of women in the urban areas is declining. There are lesser women employed in urban areas than there were some 10 years ago. Even in big cities, not even 9 per cent of the women are employed. This is the position. Therefore, you can see that in the matter of employment, discrimination is being practised. If you see the difference between the public sector and the private sector, you will find how the private sector is deliberately keeping women out that way. In 1962, there were in the organised sector, 1.37 million women; in 1973 it went up to 2.14 million. But the proportion remained the same. The share of the public sector employment went down from 65 per cent in 1962 to 52.8 per cent of the total number of women employed in industry in 1973. Such things are happening. Employment is going down, proportionately speaking, the number of the unemployed is going up among the women also. I can give very many examples. The trend is dangerous. Though the economy is advancing, in the organised sector the number of women in employment is going down as related to men. And we find that as between the two sectors, in the private sector it is going down, and it is not accidental that in the private sector it is going down. In plantations, in jute, in cotton textiles, in engineering, in collieries also, not to speak of the unorganised sector in industry, equal pay for equal work remains a dream. It is not implemented. The

Government does not do anything to implement it, despite its commitment under the Constitution, despite the ILO Convention. Now, all that we have been told after 27 years of independence is that it will be guaranteed. I do not know how it will be implemented. This is what is happening.

Now,, again, we have here the condition of the widows. I will invite your attention to a write-up which appeared in the Sunday Standard of the 10th of this month. This illustrated article is captioned, 'The tragedy of the traditional Indian widow'. The example of Brindaban is given where seven thousand widows live in conditions of extreme poverty and neglect, conditions which beggar description. Here is the story of one widow—

"Lakhi is a Comparatively rare phenomenon amongst the widows of Brindaban. She has been educated up to the fifth class. Her husband was a clerk in Writers' Building, Calcutta. He died suddenly of a stroke. Three of their five children had preceded him but there were two sons. It was a life of suffering with her in-laws after that. In the next eight years both her sons died, and the in-laws freed of all bonds, openly turned cruel. At the back of it all was fear that she would demand a share of the family property. In desperation she finally signed all the papers they wanted and turned to Brindaban. It has been 16 years. She has never heard from any of them since."

The tale of Lakhi is the tale of Indian womanhood. When their husbands die, they have nothing to fall back upon. You have your various Acts. But these are not implemented. In the society everybody turns her out, throws her out on the street. Brindaban opens the road to destitution and suffering. All that they can do there is to chant, Hare Rama, Hare Krishna. For 25 paise, they get a cup of tea. I cannot but mention here the case of UP which is reported here—

"On paper, the UP Government offers a pension of Rs. 30 a month to an aged, destitute woman. But hardly handful can avail of this scheme. There is no welfare office at Brindaban to identify, scrutinise and process the cases. Touts charge

Rs. 10 to get a medical certificate made declaring unfitness for work. Another Rs. 100 is needed to process the case. Many do not know of the scheme; of those who do, few can afford the expenses, fewer still are successful in having their pleas heard."

Such is the situation. Read this article. I should like to know what steps you are going to take. Here is the picture of women in bondage right near Delhi, not very far from here. 7,000 of them, some say 8,000 in Brindaban. And there is the Bhagwan Bhajan Ashram where for chanting hymns and praising the man who has created the Ashram, they get a cup of tea. Are we proud that we have done everything and progress has been remarkable? Even in Delhi, the Delhi Rent Control Act is such that if the husband dies, his widow has no right in the property and the entire family is thrown into the street. The Act is not amended even now.

* * * *

How are you going to protect them. I need not go into the entire story. To cut short, what about the Harijan women who are socially oppressed, who are dishonoured and who are attacked all the time by the landlords who should be put up against the wall and shot dead, really? These are the people who rule our countryside and our women are their victims there, There is no protection to them. The police or the authorities are bribed by the landlords and their men and no action is taken. Untouchability is practised. Women do not have every drinking water. They have to work hard for much less pay than what is given to men, and nothing is done to remove such disparities.

There are many laws, the Special Marriage Act, the Divorce Act and many other Acts. But these are not implemented. May be some people at the top take the benefit of these laws, but the others do not get the benefit of these laws. In fact, many do not know such laws exist in the country. Our All India Radio and other mass media of propaganda do not make these laws known to them, to those who should know them,

much less render them help in securing implementation and getting them the protection under these laws.

I have some suggestions to make. These suggestions have been included in the amendment I have proposed. I must invite your attention to the programme which has been put out by the Women's Organisations which in my view, is excellent and constructive and capable of being implemented with the resources that we have at our disposal. I would like to point out that what is needed is, the Government must act. The Government is not acting. Women of our country are not in need of sentiments, however fine they are. They are not in need of platitudes. Our literature is filled with them. Every big man when he talks about women, sheds a bucketful of tears and his heart bleeds, but the moment he goes home, he starts oppressing his wife, daughter and others and frowns upon the women community of our society. My suggestions are, better employment opportunities should be made available for women. The principle of equal pay for equal work should be implemented and those who violate it should be punished. Providing jobs even on a part-time basis to women should engage the attention of the Government. It is necessary to establish vocational training centres, at least two in every State, to equip women for employment in skilled jobs. No restriction should be imposed on employment of married women. There are some people who think that married women cannot do work as much as men can do or unmarried woman can do. They do not know that they can do as much work as men or unmarried women can do. They are ignorant in this respect. If married man can do as much work as unmarried man, married woman can also do that. We have seen how a married woman becomes a Prime Minister and also how an unmarried woman like Dr. Sarojini Mahishi can become a Minister of State. Why then needlessly make a distinction between married woman and unmarried woman? Therefore, it is very, very wrong and necessary steps should be taken by the Government in this regard and to change society's attitude towards working women and sharing by men of family responsibilities. Cheap canteens should be

provided for working women. Hostels for working women should be constructed at the rate of one at every district and in industrial areas in the cities. Creches and nurseries should be provided for the children of working mothers. Acceptance of dowry should be made a cognizable offence. There must be provision for deterrent punishment which must in all cases include imprisonment for a minimum term of six months for offences involving exploitation of helpless women for immoral traffic and similar other purposes. Provision should be made for compulsory representation of at least two women in every *panchayat*.

In this connection I want to know why Lok Sabha representation of women is going down from 33 to 21. To have one woman Prime Minister is no consolation for women who are losing even in Lok Sabha. Madam, you are sitting there. In this very House your representation is going down....

In the memorandum we have submitted to the Government on electoral reform, we have said that there must be 15 seats reserved for women in every legislature and elected bodies. There should be provision for better maternity facilities with at least one trained midwife in every village. There should be more health centres for children. There should be at least one primary and two subsidiary health centres in each block.

There should be provision for clean drinking water and improved sanitary conditions. There should be provision for seasonal creches for the children of women agricultural workers. This is very very important. Then equal pay for equal work should be made compulsory for women, employed in agricultural sector as well. This is not at all done today. There should be one school established in every village. Training centres in handicrafts and cottage industries for women in off season combined with adult literacy should be provided for. There should be serious effort on the part of authorities to put a stop to atrocities being committed on women.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have made some suggestions. I have made some criticisms of the Government I have also pointed

out what the difficulties are and where lies the root of the trouble. I again stress if you want to emancipate your women most of whom live in the country-side—there are 21 crores of them—well, it is very essential to carry out radical agrarian reform in order to wipe out the last traces of exploitation of the feudal type or semi-feudal type...

What we need today is to make vigorous efforts to bring about economic changes in the radical direction. Emancipation of women is something which cannot be separated from emancipation of the society as a whole. We have to free the society from the monopolists and landlords and must take the destiny of our women with us. I would like to know what measures the Government is going to take in this direction.

Lowering of voting age*

Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India be taken into consideration."

Sir, this is a very simple Bill. And you will see how our democracy functions. I introduced this Bill in the year, 1971. Today it is 1976... But what will be the fate of it? Bills of private Members come up for discussion after almost full five years.

Now, Sir, what does my Bill say? If I read out the Statement of Objects and Reasons, that is enough. It says:

"At the present moment the minimum qualifying age for adult franchise is 21 but the national consensus is in favour of lowering it to 18. Our young men and women at the age of 18 do play very significant role in society. Moreover, they are politically conscious and have an active mind. They look forward to the future with dynamism and courage. There is no reason why this significant section of our populace between the ages of 18 and 21 should remain without vote. On the contrary, to give them the voting right is to strengthen democracy and give it a fresh vigour."

Sir, this is my Bill. All that I want is that the voting age should be lowered to 18. Sir, this matter has been under consideration

*From the discussion on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill to amend Article 326, Rajya Sabha, 30 January 1976, cc.101-119.

of the two Houses of Parliament in different ways for a long time. The issue has been debated outside in the press and on the platform by various political parties and there is consensus in the country, insofar as one can gather from the press, that the voting age should be lowered to 18. I have not come across any statement of the Prime Minister or of other leading members of the Government repudiating or contradicting the very healthy proposal for this change in the Constitution. Sir, we do not understand why this is being delayed. At the same time, in our political and public life we find that emphasis is put on young people. Sir, even the other day, Shrimati Margaret Alva, had been made, I believe, one of the Joint Secretaries of the Congress. May be that her young age, relatively speaking, was a qualification, among other things, for the selection to that post. We find that much is being said in the young circles and in Youth Congress that young people should come up. If this is so, why the youth is denied even the voting right? This has to be considered by the Government in the context of changes not only of our outlook, but also of the society. We are moving forward in our political system. Democracy today must seek sustenance from the working people in particular and amongst the working people, from the very younger sections of the working people, that is to say, people who are relatively young and yet are mature enough to exercise the franchise with the minimum needed wisdom and political consciousness. Whenever you go to elections, you see that the young people between the ages of 18 and 21, play a very prominent role in running election campaigns, in organising election meetings, in making speeches and in approaching the older people and convincing them that they should vote for the candidates of their choice. Why, Sir, such people should be denied the right to vote? I believe, Sir, as a result of the present restriction on voting, so far as the age limit is concerned, several millions of young people, eligible voters really politically, are denied the constitutional right to vote. Well, some say, it will be a few crores of them. Has the Government any figure, I should like to know from the Law Minister. What is the population in the country between the ages of 18 and 21? And it will reveal at

once what a big section of our people is denied the voting right. This kind of arrangement should not at all take place.

Sir, recently there has been much talk about constitutional changes and we are also up against the theory or doctrine or ruling of the basic structure of the Constitution. According to the latest judgement in the Kesavanand Bharati case, well, the basic structure of the Constitution cannot be changed. Otherwise, the Golak Nath case ruling has completely been overruled. Today, any part of the Constitution we can change. In so far as this article 326 is concerned, by any stretch of imagination, it cannot be linked with the basic structure of the Constitution at all. Now there should be no difficulty in amending article 326 nor lowering the voting age. My friend has written a book which I read with great interest—Constitution in Reference to Haves and Have-nots. I must say, some of the points he has made out in that book are quite well informed and good. I liked that book because it shows some scholarship, some experience, some knowledge, and well, an independent attempt to assess the situation from the point of view of the working of the Indian Constitution. But I do not find him in that book laying much stress on the need for lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 and if I remember right nor is he necessarily against it as a private citizen or as a private Member. Well, Sir, this goes to the root of some aspect of the working of the Constitution. The working of our Constitution has been in some ways very conservative. And there we find that it is always shedding influence of the older elements who tend to be conservative and certainly do not have that dynamism and vision of the youth. And that is why, perhaps, it is not realised that the Constitution is very faulty as far as this particular article is concerned. When our Constitution was framed, it was a big step forward, I must say. In those days, we were dealing with a situation which is in many ways different from what it is today. Under the British Government of India Act of 1935, only 13 to 14 per cent of the people had voting right. An overwhelming majority of people was denied purposely and deliberately the voting right. From that, we passed on to the other aspects of

the Constitution, to other changes and then we arrived at 21. Well, it was a big step forward compared to what prevailed in the past. It did not become a matter of such controversy at that time. Even so, at that time also, why the framers of the Constitution could not accept 18 as the minimum voting age for our adult franchise. I fail to understand. Then they were very elderly people. Sir, in those days, a man like you, of your young age and young outlook, and still young in mind if not younger in ambitions was not sitting in the Chair such as you. In those days in the chair old people were sitting. In fact, the leadership was largely above 50 and in some cases above 60 even and the counsel came in the matter of framing of the Constitution from people some of whom had been steeped in the ideas of British laws, British practices, British convention, British ways and British outlook and their views prevailed in matters of functioning of democracy and the parliamentary institutions. As you know very well, apart from Shri Ambedkar who was dynamic in some respects, there were some people in the Constitution-making committee, men like Shri K.M. Munshi, who were very conservative. There were advisers like Mr. B.N. Rao and others who too were in many ways conservatives. If you take the list of this Committee, list of the names who were asked to draft the Constitution and prepare the skeleton of the Constitution, you will find that many at that time were relatively old people. Many even by the standards of these people and the Congress leaders did not have that experience. Perhaps some of them had legal and juristic experience of law. Some members of this committee had the experience but others did not have but they left this question to them. It was a political question as to who should get the voting right and at what age it should be fixed. I think they did not have much faith in the younger generation. I think that those who counselled that the voting right should be fixed at 21 and not below were mistaken. Life has shown that they were mistaken...

*** *** ***

Therefore, I say that the mistake was committed allright. We

can write the Constitution if we are in 1949. But constitutionally we can correct that mistake now learning from past experience. Now we all can correct that mistake and bring the voting age down to 18. Sir, in most other countries in the world, including the socialist countries, the voting age today is 18 years. There are also some countries in the world today where adult franchise does not even exist despite the fact that some of them are advanced countries. As far as women are concerned, they have very little say in such matters. If we look even at Indian Parliament, how many women are here? You look at the American Senate or the American House of Representatives and tell me how many women are there; not even 30! In the House of Representatives which may have a membership of nearly 500 there will not be even 20 women sitting there. Here also over the last few years the representation of women in the Lok Sabha has gone down somewhat instead of going up although a woman happens to be the Prime Minister of the country. Now, such thing happen here in this House also.

The youth are running our factories. Go to any of the public sector undertakings and you will find. Sir, that young men between the ages of 18 and 21 are running them, are creating the wealth of the nation. Some of them as skilled workers, as engineers occupying very important positions—well, some of them, not all—and you will find such people there. Some may be 20; some may be 19 and they are working. Besides, go to the college institutions, engineering institutions. You find young men between the age of 21 and 19 giving an excellent account of themselves, not only in their learning but also otherwise in their general outlook towards the problems that face the society and our country as a whole. Why should they be debarred? I cannot at all understand it. You are weakening democracy and adult franchise which we call universal. Is it really universal if you keep it restricted to 21 when the people between the ages of 18 and 21 are in a position to take certainly their rightful places in the context of choosing representatives to the Assemblies, to the Parliament? Why should there be this kind of desire? I cannot understand this. Sir, we should be proud of

our young people. But they have been much maligned and they have been accused often by some elder people and politicians according to their convenience. Whenever the youth does not act according to the biddings of elders, they are indisciplined, immature and vulnerable to pressures and so on. Whenever they dutifully follow the elders, they are regarded as very nice and disciplined persons. This is wrong. You certainly should have dynamism. Sometimes there may be expressions which the elder people may not like. But the point is to channelise them in more constructive and revolutionary directions, if I may use that expression, for the remaking of the country, for the well-being of the people and for releasing the fund of energy that is hidden in our young minds and in our young people. This should be the approach. But on the other hand, we accuse them. One ground is that they are not sufficiently mature for being given the voting right. Is it true? Do we seriously believe it? Have you no experience of this? When it comes to political movements and struggles, whether they are revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, when it comes to elections, no matter which party it is, most of us go to the young people and seek their support. Many of them are below the age of 21 and they become champions of democracy and electoral process. We entrust them with the responsibility of running elections or conducting political campaigns or upholding the image of this or that leader. On the other hand, when it comes to the question of giving them the voting right, we become niggardly, we become conservative and ungenerous. Is it setting good moral standards? Not at all. Sir, our young people can be recruited to the Army; they can be recruited to the Army if they are of 18—20 years of age. Perhaps, there is no objection to it. They can get training and they can be sent to the front to fight for the country. But they cannot be entrusted with the simple ballot paper so that they can exercise their judgement and put it in the box in whichever way they like. Is it right? Is it proper? Is it fair to the younger generation? This is the inertia which is holding us back, the ingrained conservatism which is coming in the way of giving the young people this right although the whole country is demanding it. Look at the Soviet Union where young

people of 18 years of age were given the right at the dawn of revolution. They did not wait for 27 years of revolution. Instantly, the revolution was successful. What has happened? It is one of the leading industrialised countries in the world today. The younger generation is playing its great part in the progress of the country. Look at other countries also. Look at Germany and other socialist countries. You have the same spectacle of energy, vigour, dynamism, vision and hard labour; youth making the country prosperous, strong and worthy in every way. Why should you not do it and why should you shy away from doing it even today, a thing which should have been done many years ago?

We hear nowadays that young people should be preferred for being appointed as Ministres. But in our country, you are not young until you are around 45; it seems so in some respects. We do not accept that definition of youth. In some context, it does seem that you are young only when you are 45. We do not like that. When you say that the Council of Ministers should consist of younger people, you should accept the principle and morally the argument that the younger people had been advancing for the lowering of voting age. What right have you to deny them the simple voting right? I cannot understand. And yet this has been done.

Take, for example, the Chief Ministers nowadays. Relatively young Chief Ministers are there nowadays, although they are not so young. Take, for example, Orissa, Nandini Satpathy is relatively young, but young of course, with grey hair. But nowadays that is our fashion. In West Bengal, the Chief Minister is relatively young. In many other States the Chief Ministers are relatively young. In the old days it was thought, the older you were, the more qualified you were to be in high and responsible positions. That idea we have given up nowadays. We go in for youth now or, what you call generally, the younger generation. So, recognise it in the Constitution by extending the voting right to the vast millions of people who have been denied this voting right. Sir, that would impart, inculcate in the youth a sense of participation, a sense of responsibility and a sense of

co-sharing in an active manner, in a responsible manner, the democratic process, and by this it will be all gain. The Constitution would be better, brighter and nobler by extending the right to the youth.

Sir, much is being said about changes in the Constitution nowadays, in other contexts. We are for changes in the constitution. We would like, first of all, the Directive Principles to be made enforceable. We would like, for example, article 226 to be so modified as to make the High Courts unable to issue writs to stall land reforms and other measures. We would like certain provisions of the Constitution to be so changed that the people can take a direct part in it and the functions of the Constitution are better than they are. But why can't you make the beginning here? The Prime Minister said the other day in the Lok Sabha that they would like to strengthen democracy. We welcome that statement. The nation has to be strengthened and democracy has to be strengthened.

Here comes another relatively young ex-Chief Minister. Mr. Sethi, before you came, I was just emphasising the need for lowering the voting age to 18 and in that context I have been saying that in the old days, when you were looking for Chief Ministers, you went in for the oldest person in the Congress but nowadays we go in for younger people like you, relatively speaking. I mentioned some of them and they produced better results compared to what were there some twenty years ago when one must have been sufficiently old to be considered for Chief Ministership. Dr. B. C. Roy, I think, became a Chief Minister when he was about 70 years old. Anyhow, one had to be over sixty years in those days, generally speaking, to become a Chief Minister of a State. Today, we have changed that outlook. Therefore, I say, you can do this. Accept it. As far as the young people are concerned, the ruling party is now putting so much emphasis on them. When we were discussing the question of Deputy Chairmanship of this House, we were thinking in terms of youth and, somehow or other, Sir, not being so young, you figured among the acceptable list even from the point of view of age because, here you cannot sit unless you

are thirty years old. You became the Deputy Chairman. Have we suffered? We could have found an old man. Many old people were in this House and we could have easily got hold of an elderly person with one foot in the grave to occupy the Chair so that from the Chair to the grave becomes a peaceful transition. But we thought in those days that men like you, young, with both the feet solidly on ground and available for taking in the stormy situations, should be put in the Chair and I do not think we made a bad choice. Therefore, whenever we have gone in for youth we have not suffered. When Shrimati Indira Gandhi came as the Prime Minister some 10 years ago, what was the argument given? The argument was that she is too young to become the Prime Minister of the country. That argument was put to me, put to others. Of course, it was the Congress Party that choose her as the Prime Minister but we were in the Opposition as we are now but the people asked these questions. There were very strong views against her being chosen, when elderly persons like Shri Morarji Desai and others were standing in the queue how the young lady, not conversant with the so-called parliamentary ways and methods in administration, being Minister of Information and Broadcasting only for a short while, could be expected to be put in that position. The choice was made. Shri Kamaraj took the initiative at that time to support her.

He was the Congress President and he himself was relatively a young man compared to the older people with conservative views. Now, whatever you may say, that choice was not bad. On the contrary, now you are talking of the 'Indira decade' in a very irresponsible manner. There is no decade by the name of an individual. There are decades only of **Indian people accomplishing their task for the remaking of the nation and in that context individuals and personalities shine, figure, justify their role.**

Sir, I am not going into that aspect but even then there was conservatism at that time. Well, the Congress Party will certainly say that they made a good choice. Age was no bar.

At least the qualifying age need not be 60 or so, as some people suggested. I believe she was 48 or 49...

*** *** ***

I am just giving an example. The same justification is there in the matter of age being lowered. That is why I have been saying that everywhere youth is favoured, youth has justified itself by and large. There may be individual cases both in the case of the old and young that the choice has gone wrong but by generalisation you cannot say that by opting for youth you have suffered or the good cause has suffered. Sir, our young people in universities and colleges, in factories and fields are giving a magnificent account of their patriotism, of their political consciousness, of their awareness of the national problems. Take, for example, when the counter revolutionary movement of rightists faced the country it is again the youth who led at many places to counter it. Youth has been misled by others also. It is possible to mislead young people; it is possible to mislead old people also. In fact, old people get easily misled because they have vested interests in maintaining the *status quo*. Those people who are better placed in life and have something to rely on in life, like to preserve it, and the whole world centres round them. That is a very wrong outlook. Their wisdom is not the collective wisdom of the nation. And there is no collective wisdom of the nation if the wisdom does not unleash from the fund of young age, youthful enthusiasm, youthful dynamism and experience. That wisdom will be lacking in spirit, lacking in outlook even. Therefore, Sir, why should they be denied? That is why I say again and again the proposal should be accepted. The Government would do well if they accept a non-official Constitutional amendment here, not that it should be voted today; you may continue the discussion and then you may accept it. Anyhow, the problem remains. That is why I think whatever has been said in support of the voting right at 18 deserves the most serious consideration, sympathetic consideration, by the Government...

Sir, coming to the other aspects of this matter, here is Mr. Om Mehta. He is, relatively speaking a young man. Has he

given a bad account of himself in this House when he was given responsibility? I do not know what is going to happen to him in the future, but I am talking about the past. Therefore, whenever you have opted for young people, relatively young people, even in your limited fields of choosing Ministers, giving responsibilities or pushing up, you have not erred on that account. Why should we be afraid in this matter? Sir, that is why I say that this Bill deserves acceptance. Other matters with regard to constitution changes we can discuss, but this is absolutely non-controversial. What comes in the way of getting this Bill passed? I find that the Government is getting many things passed in a great hurry without giving us even time to give amendments and so on. There is such an indecent haste and hurry in certain matters. Why should there be so much delay in regard to our Bills? It has taken my Bill five years to appear here after it was introduced. Why should there be delay in getting it passed? Let us not talk about revitalising and mobilising our youth, on the one hand, and deny them the right to vote at the age of 18, on the other. This is inconsistent. **People will not accept our credibility. Young people will never accept our credibility if we behave in this manner.**

Finally, before I sit down, in moving this Bill, I do maintain that we are proud of our young people, our young men and women, including those between the ages of 18 and 21, for whom I have demanded the voting right and who are unjustly, undemocratically and immorally denied the right to which they are entitled. I do maintain in all seriousness that morally and politically and even in a spiritual sense, for the sake of the advancement of the nation, for revitalising our democratic institution, for giving it dynamism and vision, for bringing into play the energy, drive and courage of the youth, it is absolutely essential to make, as far as possible, the youth a participant in democratic processes and indeed in the working of our democratic institutions. Hence I have placed the Bill before the House. I would ask the Government to seriously consider it.

Sir, this is also my last term here. May be another session will be there before that. Anyhow this Bill will lapse. But, Sir,

somebody may take it up. But it is time for you to give thought to it and get it passed; if not in this session, let the hon. Minister give an assurance that in the next session—the Budget session—the Bill will be passed in this House. It will be a good gesture if you accept a non-official, private Member's Constitution Amendment Bill like the one I am moving today and get it passed by both Houses of Parliament. Sir, our youth between the ages of 18 and 21 eminently deserve the voting right and they should be given the voting right. And the Government should be ungrudging in this matter and should come forward with their recommendation to the House for the acceptance of this measure. Anyhow, Sir, let this be discussed and let views be expressed. I think I am speaking not only for the young generation but for the entire population of the country which stands for democracy and progress.

Parliamentary Committees*

Sir, I move :

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India be taken into consideration."

This Bill was tabled by me actually in 1976. Now we are in 1978. This is the fate of a Private Member's Bill, apart from the fate that awaits other Bills. Now, it takes two years to arrive at this situation when I can ask for consideration of this Bill. This Bill, in my view, is a very important one from the point of view of the functioning of our Parliamentary Institution. It seeks to fill a very vital gap in our Constitution. As you know, in our country either here or at the State Legislature level, we do not have, what is called, Standing Committees of the Legislature of the House. I want to provide here Standing Committees of the two Houses of Parliament and also of the State Legislatures. That is the purpose of my Bill.

Sir, hon'ble Members are aware when the Constitution came into force and the first Lok Sabha began its work, in short, when we embarked on the career of our Republican Parliament, this issue of having Standing Committees was deeply mooted in Parliament, among the Members of Parliament, among the leaders of the various parties and with the Government. A strong suggestion was made from our side. I was a party to that

*From the discussion on Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1976 Rajya Sabha, 5 May, 1976, cc. 177—193

suggestion. At that time our Party was the first Opposition party in both Houses of Parliament supported by all others from the Opposition, if I remember right we made a suggestion that there should be standing committees of the two Houses of Parliament. Sir, the suggestion did not find acceptance. Instead, we had what used to be called in the past informal Consultative Committee. Now the word "informal" has gone. We call them Consultative Committees for the various Ministries.

But, actually, the Committees are, in fact, informal committees. They have no status. Either in the Constitution or even in the law they are a kind of arrangement of convenience between the Ministries concerned and the Members of Parliament. That is the point. It is open to the Government to call a meeting or not to call a meeting. The Committees have no *locus standi* except that they can make suggestions which can be done even without having a Consultative Committee. Therefore, they have no *locus standi* whatsoever. So these Committees are by no means, I wish to make it clear, a substitute for the Standing Committees as envisaged in the Bill or as they obtain or operate in certain other countries in a Parliamentary democratic set up. Now I have to make out as to why I am making this suggestion.

Sir, I am making this suggestion for the very valid reason that there is a vital gap between our Parliamentary Institution on the one hand and the bureaucracy on the other. The bureaucracy or the officialdom or the permanent administration, as you call it, or the civil service, whatever you call it, are responsible to Parliament through the Minister. And all that we have is a kind of right to ask questions, to raise matters and it is for the Minister to deal with them and then transmit to us as to what they find there. There is no effective direct control or supervision or superintendence or direction by the two Houses of Parliament or, as the case may be, the State Legislature, in regard to bureaucracy. There is no such thing. This has resulted in a very serious shortcoming, sometimes almost disastrous in the working of the system. A hiatus has grown between our Parliamentary Institutions on the one hand and the Administration on the other. The so called link being provided

by the Minister is more of a misnomer than a living link. This, one must understand. Yet, Sir, bureaucracy should be under the most effective control of our Parliamentary Institutions, of the legislator, the M.P., the M.L.A. and so on. That is why we have suggested this arrangement and when it is provided for in the Constitution, well, its functions will naturally follow and they can be laid down by Parliament that way. In the first place they will have *locus standi* and these bodies should be the bodies through which Parliament should function..

What happens now? We meet here five months a year. Lok Sabha meets seven months a year, the State Assemblies less. All that we do is, we send some questions and we get the replies. We raise issues and, well, whatever impact they may have, they have. That is all. The Consultative Committees meet more or less regularly—some of them—once during the session and another time during the intersession period. That is about all. There is not any kind of rapport between the Members of Parliament and high officials.

In the Standing Committee they come. They are asked questions. Their actions are subjected to supervision and scrutiny by the concerned Standing Committee. That is done, as you know, and almost a day-to-day link will be established. When the session is not there, the Committees function very effectively and as if a little Parliament is functioning. But in a more businesslike, direct manner with a view to guiding the Administration and seeing that the impact of public opinion, the impact of public experience, the impact of the collective wisdom of Parliament is felt on the day-to-day work of the Administration. That is why, Sir, the suggestion has been given.

Now, what have we seen during this period? Bureaucrats are becoming very powerful. I am not meaning the small ones but the top ones, the Secretaries, the Additional Secretaries, the Joint Secretaries and sometimes even the Deputy Secretaries. Correspondingly, the Directors, the Deputy Directors and similar other officials. They are gathering, invisibly, much power in their hands and, as you know, there is an isolation of such categories of people from the masses, from the people, even

from the representatives of the people. They sit in the galleries. They do not know how the Members of Parliament feel except that they hear us sometimes and they draw their own conclusions. But this is a very formalistic way of dealing with a situation. They are not in a small committee where mutual exchanges take place, where Members of Parliament hear what they have to say and they hear what Members of Parliament have to say. The line of communication there is two-way. Here it is not so. Here they are passive spectators or listeners in the galleries when we are talking. We want the situation to change. They and we should talk together and see how the Administration is run. This is very essential from the point of view of supervising their work and establishing the supremacy of Parliament over the Executive. We talk about the supremacy of Parliament. But in which fields are we supreme? We are supreme in law; we are supreme to some extent, in the Constitution. But really when it comes to the day-to-day administration, the implementation of the policies formulated by Parliament, the supreme authority, in fact of life, if not in fact of law, vests with the bureaucracy. We do not have any control over the bureaucracy in this regard. Well, it is a very serious gap in the working of the system. A process of bureaucratisation goes on and we have seen what happened during the Emergency: the worst features of the present arrangement.

What prevents us from changing the Constitution to make provisions for Standing Committees and have direct authority over the bureaucracy? Well, we must own our responsibility. I am not one of those who believe in criticising others all the time without making self-criticism of ourselves. I think we stand subjected to some kind of self-criticism in this matter if we are honest. We saw what happened during the Emergency. But was it happening during the Emergency only? Was it not happening earlier? You know how some of the top officials treat you sometime. You have yourself complained about it here. But you are very touchy about the protocol.

I am not bothered about the protocol. Whether I get a seat in the front row or in the next row after an ICS officer or an IAS

officer is not the main point. The main point is whether Parliament has its superiority established over the bureaucracy in the day-to-day working of the system as a whole. And that superiority must be operative and functional, not notional, not fictitious, not in matter of formal law only; it should be a matter of fact. That is what I want. That is how I see it. You see, as a result of lack of communion between Members of Parliament and the bureaucracy, anti-popular, anti-democratic, authoritarian trends grow in the higher echelons of the bureaucracy, corruption grows. Disdain and contempt for the people, for their urges and aspirations, also grow in the corridors of the bureaucratic power. All these are inevitable products not just of individual virtues and vices; they are the product of the machinery which you have created. In that machinery when a bureaucrat is trained in some places, isolated from the people, by another set of bureaucrats, retired or otherwise, they begin to operate. The whole thing becomes an in-built feature of the system itself, and we are the victims of it, the country is the victim of it and democracy becomes the victim of it; the parliamentary institutions get distorted, deformed and inhibited in many ways. This is what we have seen.

We do not go to the Secretariat; why should we go? Nor do they come to us; why should they come? It is not necessary for them. But, if committees are there, there will be an arrangement where we can discuss how things are being implemented. This Government and the other Government which was here before, have failed largely on the plane of policy, apart from the policy plane also. Implementation of many of the policies is not possible to a satisfactory extent unless there is co-operation between the instruments of implementation, the officials, on the one hand, and the people on the other, and this can be established only through some such mechanism as the Standing Committee as a link between the people whose co-operation has to be sought and the established machinery of implementation, namely, the executive organs of the Government. That is how we should view this matter. Now we have nothing of the kind. The result is that the Secretaries have no

sense of responsibility with regard to the Members of Parliament except that some formality is there; that is all. You can go and find out anywhere how they talk about us; sometimes you also talk about them; very often we accuse them without even knowing what they are doing. Sometimes the accusations are not even valid. They also feel very badly about us. But, they have their way because it is they who are sitting at the implementation point and even at the policy formulation point. Many of the Ministers have their policies formulated by the officials. There is a phrase, "think tank" or "brains trust". Call it as you like. These are to be found somewhere in the Central Secretariat, in the South Block, in the North Block or any other blocks even though some block-heads may be sitting there. It is they who formulate this thing, it is they who process it, it is they who initiate policy formulation, and then you come here and get it passed.

Why should it be so? Why should such issues also not be discussed in a Standing Committee where the members of the Government side and the members from the Opposition side, all, can sit together, naturally, within the framework of the Government policy because the Government is ultimately responsible to Parliament and it lives because of majority in Parliament? Well, the policies are Parliament? Well, the policies are formulated in that manner. That is very very important. This is not done. The result is that we suffer, the Ministers suffer, and what is more the people and the country suffer. I can cite many instances: Sometimes I find the Ministers reading out replies written by their officials which had not been even properly read earlier by the Ministers concerned, because they fumble; sometimes they misread even the replies which are written. This has developed, and the officials take full advantage of it. We would not like this thing to continue; this is not at all good. That is why, let a more living control be there.

PART THREE
Some Lighter Interludes

3363LS-1B

Some Lighter Interludes*

Though a firebrand parliamentarian, Shri Bhupesh Gupta was an amicable, jovial and warm-hearted person. Everybody on the floor of the House—either his party colleagues or his political rivals—used to appreciate his witty and endearing nature. In this section, we have endeavoured to catch a glimpse of this lesser-known aspect of Bhupeshji's personality by bringing forth certain amusing remarks made by him during the course of discussion in the Rajya Sabha.

All smile

Shri Arjun Arora: Has the discussion** begun?

*Shri Bhupesh Gupta...*in all seriousness. The Leader of the House is there. He is smiling. Mr. Hathi always smiles. It is good that he smiles, but it is bad as he smiles even when the matter is too serious.

A nice company

The House was having a discussion on the international situation. The Prime Minister@ was shortly to go to Belgrade and then to Moscow. Shri Gupta who was speaking in the House on the foreign policy said that he felt when the Prime Minister went abroad on such missions, he should be accompanied not merely by officials but also by some members.

* See Sudarshan Agarwal (Ed): *The House Laughs: An Anthology of Wit and Humour in the Rajya Sabha*, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 1989.

** Discussion on the document entitled "Approach to the Fourth Five-Year Plan".

@Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

Though Shri Gupta ruled out the possibility of any member of his party* being included in the Prime Minister's entourage, he suggested that many members opposite in the Congress Party could be acceptable to the Prime Minister. Replying to the debate later, Shri Nehru made it a point to comment on Shri Bhupesh Gupta's suggestion. He said:

"I do not know why he has excluded himself. Perhaps he does not like Belgrade."

To this Shri Bhupesh Gupta replied:

"I like Belgrade. Sometimes you do not like me. I would very much like to go with you."

Bell causing misunderstanding

*Shri Bhupesh Gupta:.....*Well, Sir, if you ring the bell when I talk of the Ministers, people outside might misunderstand.

The Deputy Chairman: You have taken half-an-hour.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: I know but if you ring the bell when I mention the Ministers, people may misunderstand.

Chair's eye

Shrimati Yashoda Reddy: Madam Deputy Chairman**, I am trying to catch your eye.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: You have caught all our eyes.

Shrimati Yashoda Reddy: After you, if the Chair allows me, I

* Communist Party.

** Shrimati Violet Alva.

want to speak, not with your permission, but with the Chair's permission.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: Why are you concerned with a pair of eyes? So many eyes are on you.

Shrimati Yashoda Reddy: I am only concerned with the Chair's eyes, not with 'anybody else's'.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: I know that you never like my eyes. What can I do to my eyes?

Cock and bull government

In the course of his speech Shri Krishan Kant referred to the West Bengal Government as cock and bull government. This was immediately objected to by Shri A. P. Chatterjee who said that it was out of order to refer to a constitutionally constituted government as cock and bull government. Later, intervening in the debate Shri Pitamber Das remarked:

"Sir, there is hardly any point in objecting to what Mr. Krishan Kant has said. Probably what he means is this that the Government is being headed by two persons, one of whom is a cock and other is a bull."

This remark of Shri Pitamber Das led to the following interesting exchange in the House.

Shri Godey Murahari: Mr. Ajoy Mukherjee is the cock and Mr. Jyoti Basu is the bull.

The Deputy Chairman: Mr. Krishan Kant, you ask your question.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: Sir, we are all bulls against vested interests and cocks against monopoly.

Coloured glasses to Ministers

Principal Devaprasad Ghosh: As part of its programme as a

welfare State, does the Government of India intend supplying spectacles free to all those persons who need them just as the Labour Government did in England but which the Churchill Government had decided to discontinue?

Shri D.P. Karmarkar: I shall take note of that suggestion.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: May I know whether the Ministers are being supplied with coloured glasses?

Concern for property

During the discussion over a calling attention relating to deteriorating law and order situation in Delhi, *Shri K.C. Pant** made some remarks in lighter vein to which *Shri Bhupesh Gupta* said that he appreciated jokes but:

“Not at the cost of my throat; not at the cost of little property that I have, I like humour at the mercy of burglars”.

*The Deputy Chairman*** You do not have any property.

Shri K.C. Pant: I am very glad that he has concern for property.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: Yes, of course, I have. I have a typewriter—the highest property that I have.

Difficult to enter heaven

Shri Debabrata Mookerjee: I will not be instructed by you even if you promise me a place in heaven.

*Then Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

***Shri Godey Mufarahi.*

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: You can be sent to heaven, but the gods will refuse you.

Fit for dancing institution

The House was discussing the matter regarding the allegations made against Shri Kanti Bhai Desai, son of Shri Morarji Desai, former Prime Minister. Shri Manubhai Patel who raised a point of order spoke very feelingly in favour of Shri Desai with a lot of movement of his limbs. Shri Bhupesh Gupta who was watching him closely observed:

"Sir, I have listened to his point of order. If the movement of his hands, if the movement of his fingers is relevant, he should be sent to some dancing institution."

Good place to take refuge

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru was speaking on the Extradition Bill. To elucidate his point Pandit Kunzru said:

"...Suppose my hon. friend, Shri Gupta fearing that he would be arrested and punished under the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act passed by Parliament recently, slips out of the country and takes refuge, say, in Pakistan or in South Africa."

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: I would rather try Dr. Kunzru's house, but not there.

Misfortune

Shri Bhupesh Gupta was speaking on the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill, 1962. Wanting him to finish his speech, the Deputy Chairman* told Shri Gupta that she thought he had made himself quite clear on that amendment. This led to the following hilarious exchange in the House:

The Deputy Chairman: You have made it very clear.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: To you, Madam. If you give your vote in my favour, I am prepared but I want to convince other members.

*Shrimati Violet. Alva:

because I must pursue this matter.

An Hon. Member: Are you sure you will be able to convince?

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: We live with good hopes just as you live with hopes.

The Deputy Chairman: Let us hear the Minister then.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: You seem to be very fond of hearing the Minister.

The Deputy Chairman: You said you live in hopes and...

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: I know the Ministers are charming and very nice to hear but we are sometimes also not so uncharming and not so unpleasant to hear.

The Deputy Chairman: Your charm is known all round.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta: No, Madam. This is one of my misfortunes that I cannot charm the Chair.

Re-enacting Mahabharata

Once speaking in the House Shri Arjun Arora referred to Mrs. Yashoda Reddy as Mrs. Subhadra but immediately retracted by addressing her correctly and made this comment to explain the cause of the slip:

"Being Arjuna I always think of Subhadra."*

This led Shri Bhupesh Gupta to comment:

"You are making a speech like Krishna. Hence you think of Yashoda."**

* Subhadra was the wife of Arjuna, who was the hero of the Mahabharata war.
 ** Yashoda was the foster mother of Lord Krishna.